



**The Nature Boy Is Ready For Broadway
AND NEW YORK IS READY FOR RIC FLAIR!**

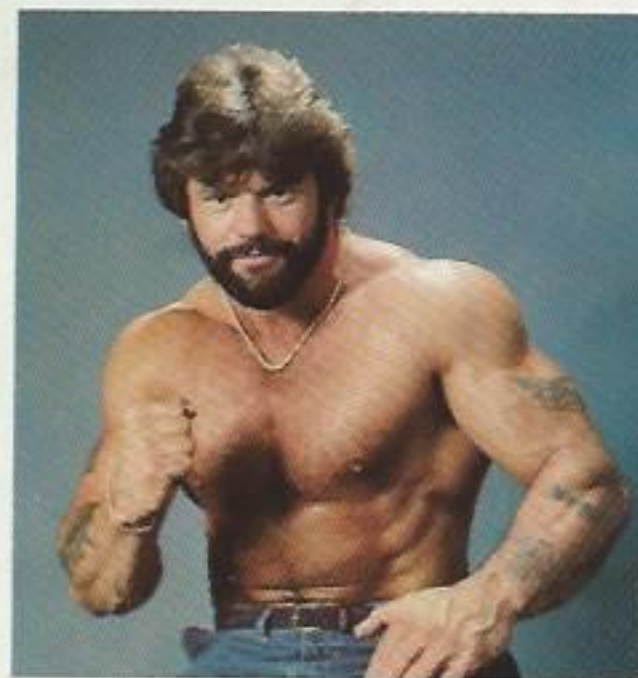
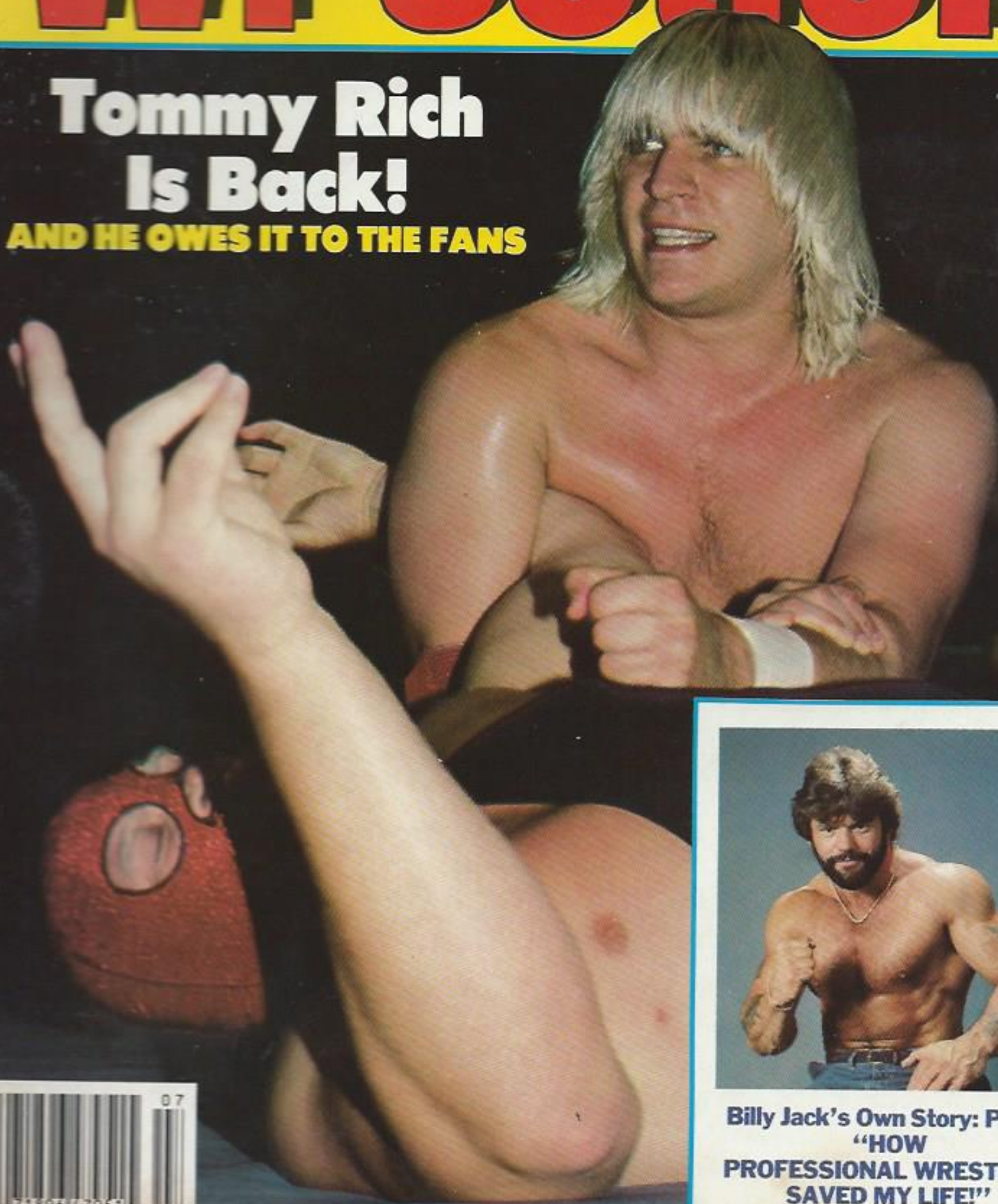
July 1984

47951  \$1.50

THE **Wrestler**

**Tommy Rich
Is Back!**

AND HE OWES IT TO THE FANS



**Billy Jack's Own Story: Part II
"HOW
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING
SAVED MY LIFE!"**



WHAT'S HAPPENING!

By BILL APTER

Fans across the country are still shocked by the change that has come over **Mr. Wrestling II**.

Last month we reported how



Mr. Wrestling II, who for years was among the most popular men in the sport, has stunned the wrestling community with his change in attitude. Wrestling II and Magnum T.A. have entered into an ugly feud.

Junkyard Dog offered **Magnum T.A.** a shot at his North American heavyweight title. But Magnum's coach, Wrestling II, protested, saying that the only reason JYD offered T.A. the match was because he knew he could easily beat him.

Now the student is testing his skills against his former coach, as T.A. feuds with Wrestling II with the North American title at stake.

"I taught this punk everything he knows," Wrestling II told us recently, "and he's well aware of it. He owes everything to me. If not for my training and knowledge, he wouldn't be *half* the success he is today. I know that, he knows that, and the fans know that. But everyone is trying to tell me I'm wrong in this situation. I'm not wrong, and I'll prove it to that punk. I may have taught him all he knows, but I didn't teach him all I know! He's still got a few things left to learn. He's got to be put in his place."

Ivan Koloff regained the Mid-Atlantic title from **Angelo Mosca Jr.** in Wrestling II demanded a title match of his own, and, on March 12 in The Municipal Auditorium in New Orleans, Wrestling II used a loaded kneepad to beat JYD for the title.

Charlotte, North Carolina, on March 18 ... **Bobby Heenan** is managing **Harley Race** for several matches in the St. Louis area ... **Tully Blanchard**, managed in the Mid-Atlantic area by **Paul Jones**, is seeking a match with WWC Universal heavyweight champion **Carlos Colon** ... **Sir Oliver Humperdink** is reportedly negotiating with **James J. Dillon** regarding a business partnership; Humperdink has also been spotted in a Detroit gym with **George "The Animal" Steele**.

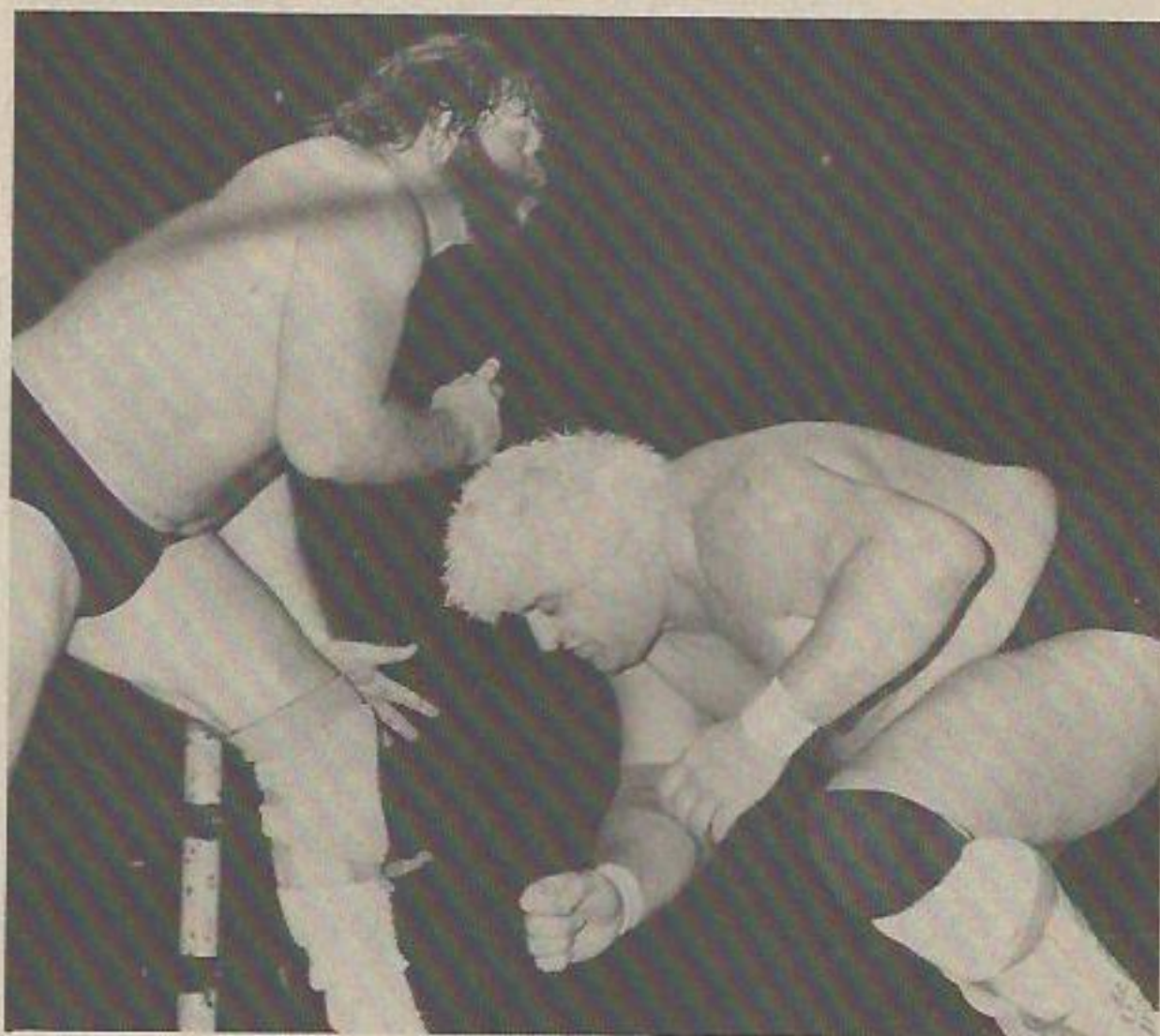
In last month's issue of *The Wrestler*, we printed a story entitled, "Introducing **Brickhouse Brown**." Who would have thought that in such a short time Brown would be the center of controversy in the Mid-Atlantic area? Here's how it happened:

Brown was wrestling **Ernie Ladd** in a televised match. **Rufus R. Jones** was in Brown's corner, and called him out of the ring several times during the match to coach him. Brown was doing well, but the size differential between himself (5'10", 225 pounds) and Ladd (6'10", 354 pounds) was too great to overcome. At one point, Jones came up to the ring to argue with

(Continued on page 62)

CORRESPONDENTS Reports

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did! Send your reports to: CORRESPONDENT EDITOR, BOX 48, ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY 11571.



Dusty Rhodes reaches out for Jim Duggan's legs during the early stages of their "first blood match" in Orlando, Florida.

Orlando, Florida (Correspondent—Earl Roop): In the main event at the Eddie Graham Sports Complex, "The American Dream," Dusty Rhodes battled Hacksaw Jim Duggan in a "first blood match," in which the first man to make the other bleed would be the winner. Since Rhodes bleeds easily, he was given an added inducement to taking

the match: If Dusty were the winner, he would get the chance to wrestle Duggan's Florida adviser, Kevin Sullivan, in a five-minute Texas bullrope match.

Duggan started the bout by eyegouging Rhodes and pummeling his forehead. Rhodes battled back with punches and elbow-smashes. The two wrestlers rolled out of the ring and both made

unsuccessful attempts to ram the other's head into the ringpost.

At the 15-minute mark, Duggan whipped Rhodes into the referee, who fell out of the ring. Sullivan came to ringside and handed Duggan a pair of brass knuckles. Rhodes saw Duggan receive the object and grabbed his bullrope. Before Duggan could use his weapon, Rhodes hit him with the metal cowbell tied to the rope.

When the referee reentered the ring, he saw Duggan bleeding from the forehead and awarded the match to The Dream.

In the bullrope match against Sullivan, Rhodes was overwhelming. Sullivan, it should be remembered, had thrown ink into the eyes of Dusty's sister a short time ago, and The Dream was more intent on hurting the Satan-worshipper Sullivan than pinning him. The two battled to the five-minute time limit, but Rhodes had left Sullivan a beaten man.

In other bouts, Billy Jack defeated Kendo Nagasaki ... Barry Windham defeated Black Bart ... Mike Graham and Mike Rotondo defeated Kevin Sullivan and Kharma ... Ron Bass defeated Mike Davis ... Joe Lightfoot drew with One Man Gang ... Hector Guerrero defeated Dennis Brown.

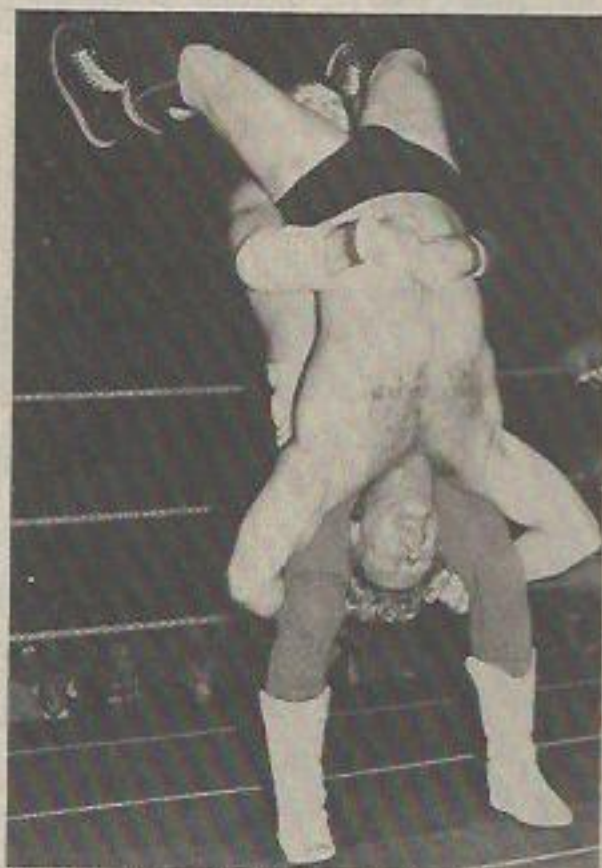
Temple, Texas (Correspondent—Bob Miller): As a featured attraction at the Civic Center, 10 stars of Southwest Championship Wrestling participated in a Texas brawl. In this event, the last wrestler standing was declared the winner and awarded a check for \$5,000. Foreign objects and taped fists were legal, and there were no disqualifications.

Entrants included The Fabulous Blonds—Ken Timbs and Eric Embry, Killer Brooks, Sheepherder Butch Miller, Bobby Jagers, Exotic Adrian Street, Al Perez, Manny Fernandez, Relampago Leon, and Henry Garcia.

(Continued on page 52)

YOU ASKED US

Here's the monthly feature which YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR question! Only the best questions will be answered—so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to: YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER, PO Box 58, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571. Questions will be answered only in this column and at our discretion

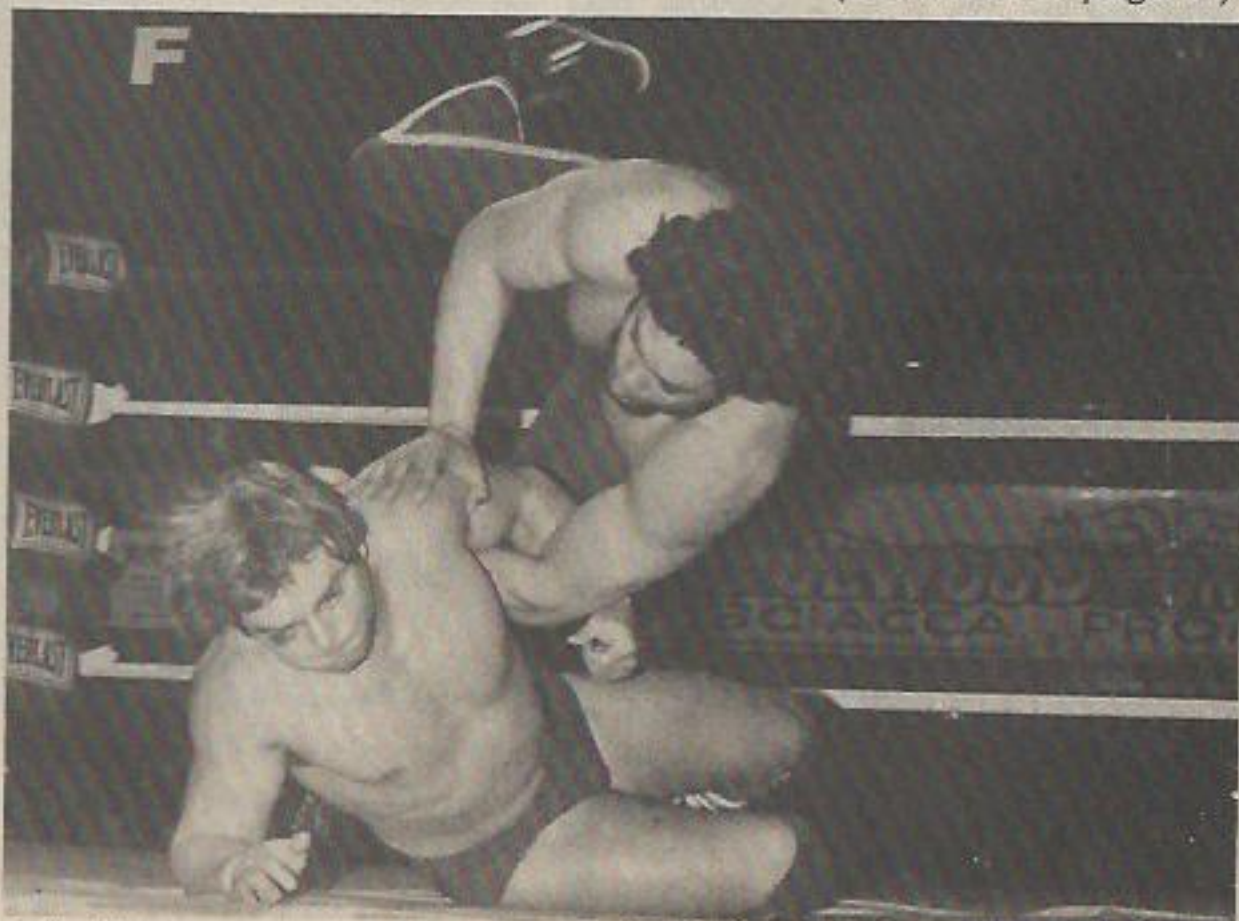


Jerry Lawler, piledriving ex-AWA champion Nick Bockwinkel, would like a shot at current champ Jumbo Tsuruta.

Q: "I have a question for the 'King of Wrestling,' Jerry Lawler: You've been wrestling in a lot of tag team matches with Jos LeDuc. Does this mean that you're not going to challenge for the AWA World championship anymore?"—Quentin Nillson, Louisville, KY

A: "Quentin, I will never stop trying to win that AWA World

championship," Lawler said. "Right now, however, my friend Jos LeDuc and I hold the AWA Mid-Southern tag team championship. I have to concentrate on defending this title right now, but I'm still wrestling single matches and holding on to my ranking in the AWA. I'm not giving up on the World title, not at all."



Eddie Gilbert armdrags Mac Rivera during one of his WWF victories. Looking to further his career, Gilbert has moved to the Mid-Southern region.

Q: "My question is for Eddie Gilbert: Will he be coming back to the WWF? I think he should have gotten a title shot in the WWF, and I really don't blame him for leaving."—Sandi Reising, Cambridge, MA

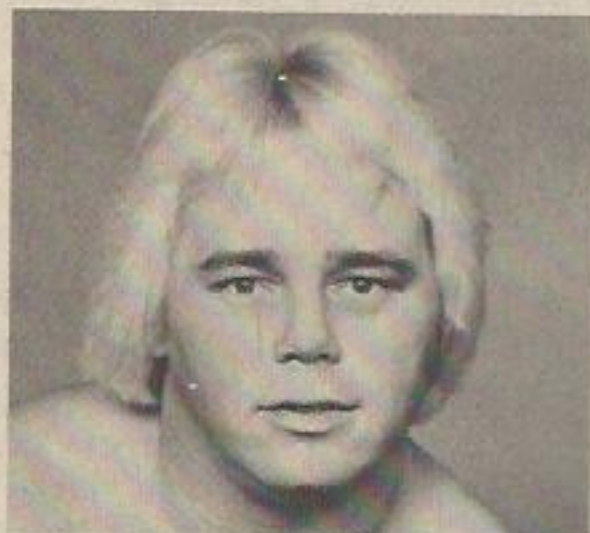
A: "That's exactly why I left, Sandi," Gilbert said. "I was made a lot of promises. I was promised another shot at both the junior heavyweight and Intercontinental titles. I never got either one. I had to think about my career. I'm back in the Mid-Southern area and I think this is the place I will get the most attention, the good matches, and, eventually, a title."

Q: For Tommy Rogers: "Do you ever think about how much you could hurt yourself when you jump off the top rope to do the 'Rogers rocket'?"—Julie Nichols, North Bergen, NJ

A: "Yes, Julie, I think about the danger, and knowing that it's there makes me a more careful wrestler. Sometimes, you have to weigh the pluses and minuses. There's an element of danger, but if you set your opponent up properly and don't
(Continued on page 54)

Thumbs Up

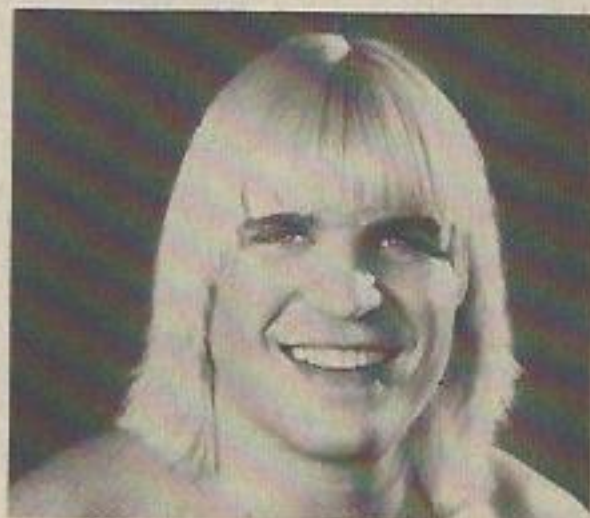
Each issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.



THUMBS UP to Playboy Buddy Rose: If any fans still maintained doubts about Rose's conversion to the scientific side of wrestling, they should doubt no longer. In addition to receiving cheers from fans throughout the Pacific Northwest, Rose was recently voted the Most Popular Wrestler in that area. As Rose's feuds with Ed Wiskowski, Rip Oliver, The Assassin, and others intensify, we feel confident that his position as a fan favorite will grow even stronger. We salute Playboy Buddy Rose with an admiration of his new style in the ring, and his acceptance by the fans out of the ring.



THUMBS UP to Rufus R. Jones: Jones has decided to share his vast knowledge of professional wrestling with an up-and-coming young athlete, Brickhouse Brown. Brown, the subject of the "Introducing" feature in last month's issue, was advised by Jones for a match against the giant veteran Ernie Ladd. Despite his size, the 5'10", 225-pound Brown defeated the former football star by using his quickness and agility. Brown is a wrestler who is headed for stardom in the sport, and with Jones' experience and skill behind him, it seems as if he'll soon reach that goal.



THUMBS UP to Tommy Rich: Rich, who has returned to wrestling as one of the new "Fabulous Ones" with Eddie Gilbert, has made the adjustment to tag team wrestling very easily. It was feared when Rich was picked by Jackie Fargo to team with Gilbert that he was too accustomed to wrestling in singles matches to make a successful tag team partner. With intensive training and strategy sessions, however, Gilbert and Rich have quickly become a fine team. Rich has also stepped up his personal training regimen, which has helped his individual performance, and for these things he should be commended.



THUMBS UP to Jerry Lawler: Lawler set his personal biases aside in order to keep the Mid-Southern tag team belts in the Mid-Southern area. When those belts were held by Elijah Akeem and Kareem Muhammad, there was a threat that they might be taken to Florida by the champions' financial backer, James J. Dillon. Dillon said he would take the belts out of the Mid-Southern area unless Lawler teamed with Jos LeDuc, who is managed by Lawler's archrival, Jimmy Hart. Lawler put his hatred and prejudices aside to team with LeDuc. Lawler and LeDuc won the belts and successfully kept them in the Mid-Southern area, where they belong.

Thumbs Down



THUMBS DOWN to Dino Bravo: Canadian International heavyweight champion Bravo has been the center of controversy lately. When Bravo's frequent tag team partner Rick Martel suggested that the two men wrestle each other, Bravo reacted with an attitude that was wholly unexpected. While Martel intended for the match to be a classic scientific encounter, Bravo felt compelled to take an extremely aggressive stance in the matchup. This in turn raises greater questions about Bravo's dedication to the scientific method of wrestling. We are disappointed by Bravo's reaction to Martel's challenge, and we sincerely hope that he is not considering a complete conversion to rulebreaking.



THUMBS DOWN to The Spoiler: The veteran masked wrestler recently revealed the identity of Sweet Brown Sugar as Skip Young, hoping to damage his rival's career. The Spoiler didn't realize that Young has never tried to hide his identity with the mask; he only wears it because he likes to. If asked, he'll tell you exactly who he is. Still, Spoiler did try to hurt Young, and now he is claiming that any masked wrestler who crosses his path will have his identity revealed. We condemn The Spoiler for his attempts to undermine the basic precepts and traditions of masked wrestling.



THUMBS DOWN to Sgt. Slaughter: While Slaughter has got to be admired for his defense of patriotism in the face of The Iron Sheik's insults of the United States (indeed, receiving a "thumbs up" for that reason in last month's issue), we feel compelled to point out that there are two problems with Slaughter's campaign: First, he has continued to wrestle in tag team matches, both conventional and six-man, with such partners as Tiger Chung Lee and Mr. Fuji. Second, Slaughter has become single-mindedly obsessed with his campaign against The Iron Sheik, and we question whether this may be hurting his training regimen and his career as a whole.



THUMBS DOWN to Terry Taylor: Taylor, who entered the Mid-South area and immediately began feuding with "The Russian Connection" of Nikolai Volkoff and Krusher Khrushchev, has now gone just a bit too far. With assistance from "The Rock 'n' Roll Express," Taylor attacked Khrushchev and painted him red. First of all, Taylor should have had better sense and resisted sinking to the rulebreakers' level with the sneak-attack. Secondly, Taylor's preoccupation with the Russians has stunted his progress toward the North American championship. Taylor should forget about revenge and redirect his energies toward that title.

Q&A

Each month, *The Wrestler* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in the fans' minds



Paul Ellering's legs become rubbery after he is slugged by the burly Anderson. Although Anderson has proven to be an objective announcer, he does not hide his feelings about Precious Paul.

Q: I guess the first thing to ask you about, Ole, would be Precious Paul Ellering. He's a man who really gets under your skin, and I wonder if you could explain to our readers why that is so.

A: Well, it's quite simple. Paul Ellering is a coward. A big-mouth. A braggart. He's afraid to stand up for what he says, which isn't much to begin with, and he lets other people fight his battles for him. He's like the pesky kid brother who makes trouble, then starts whining when he's disciplined for it. All I ever hear Ellering do is whine and, quite frankly, I'm getting sick of it.

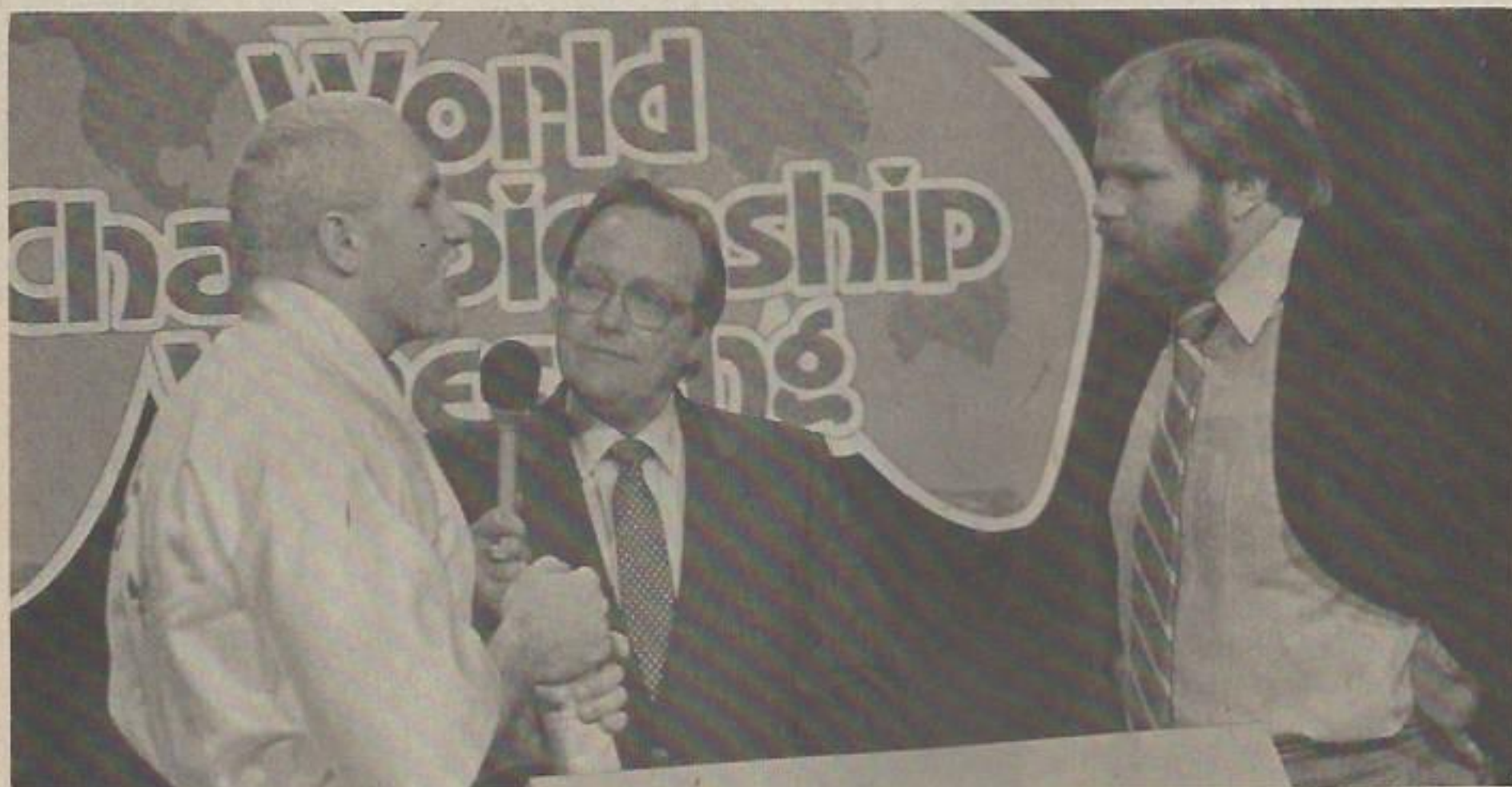
Q: Well, you've sort of made Ellering your personal campaign lately, and I'm wondering . . .

A: A personal campaign? Perhaps. But Precious Paul Ellering is the kind of a man—and I use that term with a great degree of hesitation—who really gets under my skin. I despise him for the reasons I mentioned above, particularly the fact that he instigates trouble and then lets people like Jake Roberts, The Road Warriors, and The Spoiler do his dirty work. And yes, I admit it, I enjoy seeing Ellering receive his just due.



OLE ANDERSON

OLE ANDERSON HAS long had a reputation as one of the most aggressive and successful tag team wrestlers in the sport's history. He has held a share of the NWA World tag team title several times, both with his brother Gene and with Stan Hansen as partner. But Anderson's most recent success has come about not as the result of his activities in the ring, but through his activities behind the microphone. As color commentator for *World Championship Wrestling* alongside play-by-play man Gordon Solie, Anderson has earned a reputation for fairness and objectivity. In his new role, Anderson possesses a rare perspective on the events occurring in the Georgia area. Associate Editor Craig Peters recently discussed some of these events with Anderson.



Ellering has words with Anderson on the set of *World Championship Wrestling*, as Gordon Solie mediates. In perhaps his most despicable act to date, Ellering paints Jay Youngblood as he is held against the ropes by The Road Warriors (below).



Q: Some people have speculated that you might come back out of your semiretirement to team

regularly with Stan Hansen and make a run at The Road Warriors' National tag team title.

A: You know, I receive a lot of mail—and I enjoy hearing from the fans all the time—and I must say that a lot of people have asked me about that possibility. I don't know. I haven't really discussed that thoroughly with Stan, so I don't know. Me and Stan against The Road Warriors? It's an interesting idea, that's for sure, but the question is whether it's an idea whose time has come.

Q: There have been a lot of interesting developments in the area,

and unfortunately we don't have time to discuss each one in depth, but I'd like to get your reactions, at least briefly, about some of the people involved in those developments.

A: All right, shoot.

Q: Okay. Let's start off with Jay Youngblood.

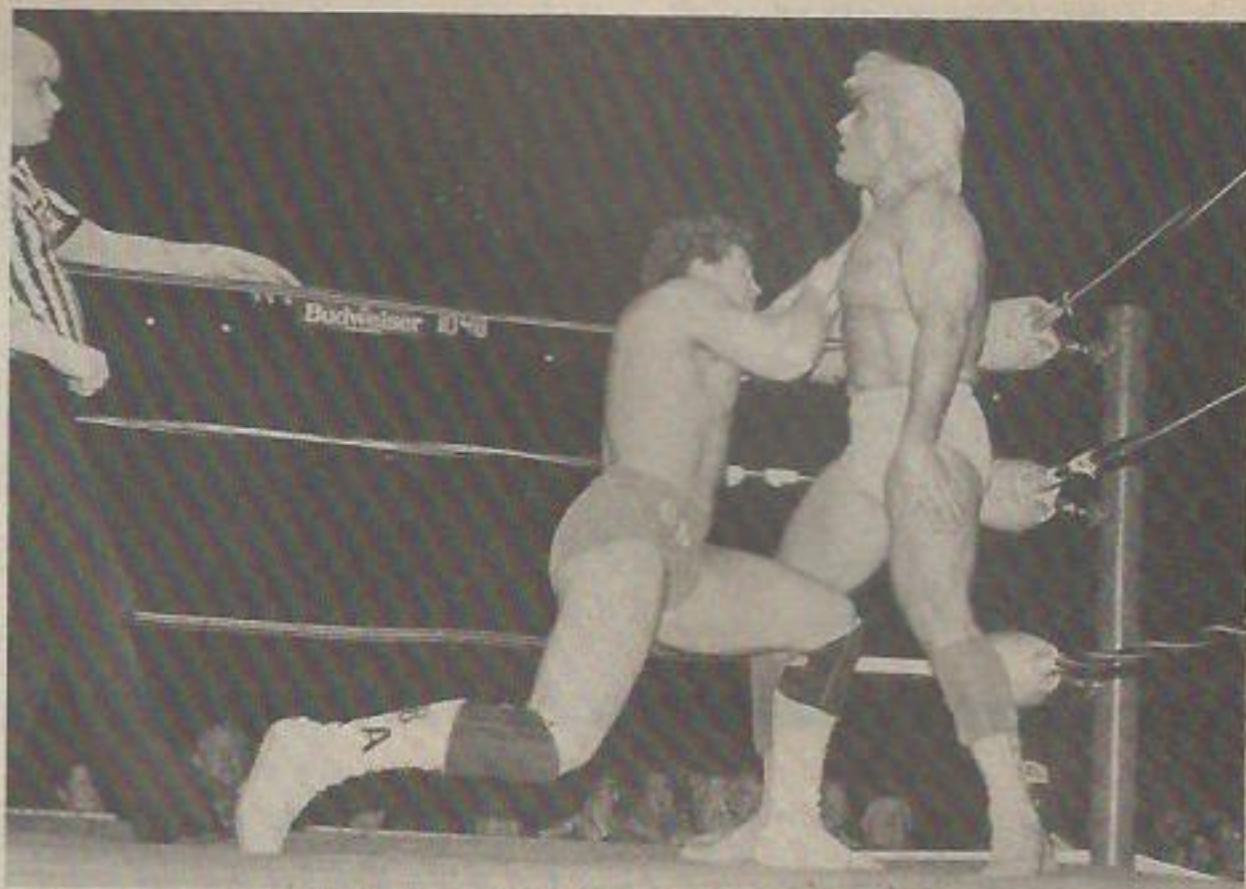
A: You know, I have the utmost respect for a man like Jay Youngblood. He wrestles hard, he's held a share of the NWA World tag championship several times along with Rick Steamboat. He's a hell of a kid, with a hell of a record, and he's improving all the time. But again, we're getting back to Ellering, because it was he who took white paint and painted Jay's face and chest while The Road Warriors held him against the ropes. It was a humiliating experience for Jay, and I'd like to see Ellering pay for that . . . among many other things.

Q: Brad Armstrong.

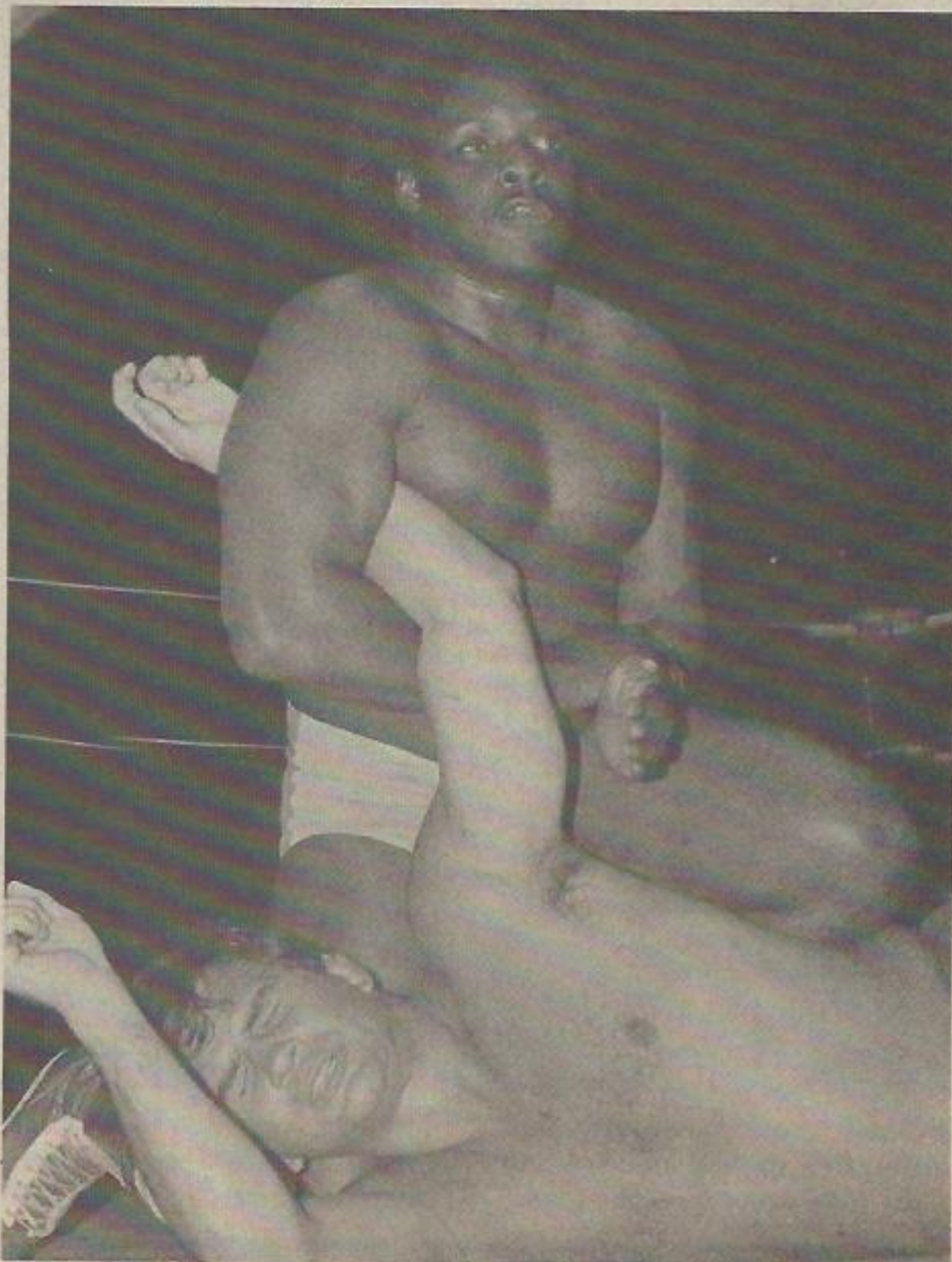
A: Well, Brad is of course the National heavyweight champion, and a lot of people think that the way he won the title from Ted DiBiase was a fluke and a cheat to DiBiase. But I have to say that Brad has really grown into the title, he's made the championship his own, and that's not an easy thing for a young man of his age to be able to do. You've got to admire him for that.

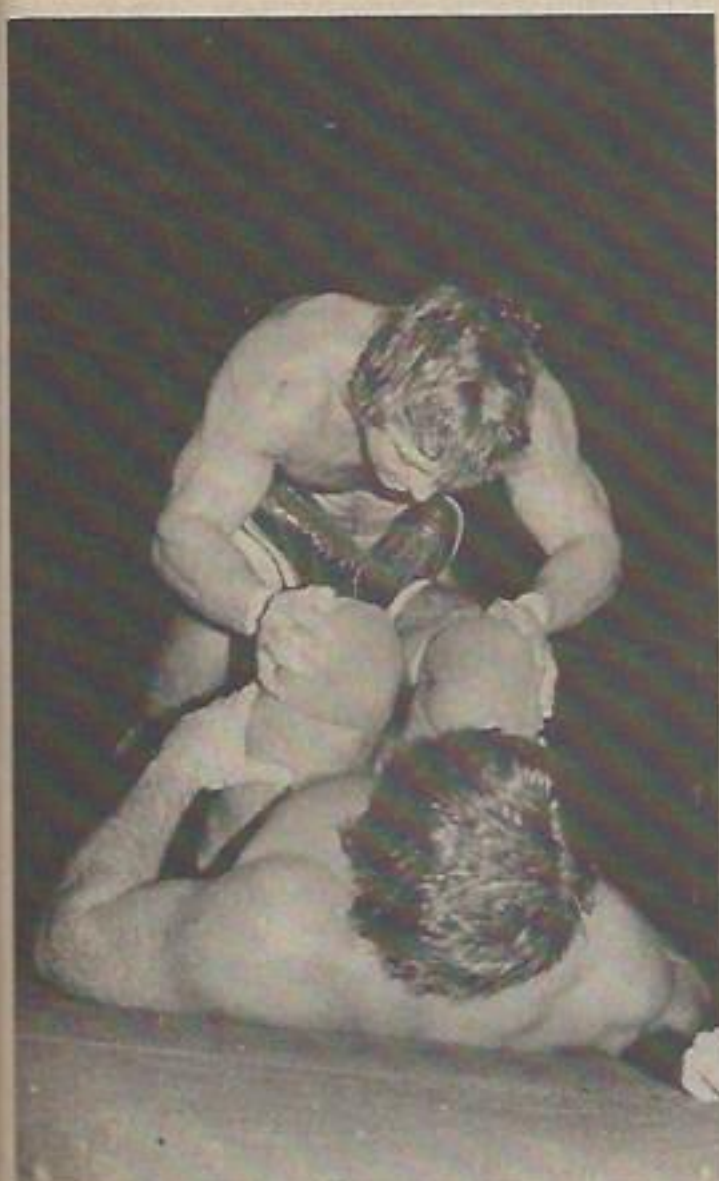
Q: Sweet Brown Sugar.

A: You mean, of course, Skip Young. I think the way Skip stood up to The Spoiler's challenge was excellent. Skip is a terrific wrestler, a terrific person, an excellent aerial wrestler, and an all-round excellent athlete. Whether you call him Sweet Brown Sugar or Skip Young, he's still the same great athlete. And, once again, you can't get away from mentioning Precious Paul Ellering, because



Anderson has extremely high regard for Brad Armstrong (vs. Ric Flair, above), Skip "Sweet Brown Sugar" Young (vs. Jerry Brisco, below), and junior heavyweights Les Thornton and Tommy Rogers (opposite right).





it was at Ellering's insistence that The Spoiler made the challenge to Skip.

Q: Les Thornton and Tommy Rogers.

A: Of course, Tommy and Les have been engaged in a tug-of-war battle for the NWA Junior heavyweight championship, and these have been some classic scientific matches. Les is a legend in his own time, and has done a lot to bring greater recognition to the junior heavyweights. And Tommy has got a future ahead of him that should take him right to the top.

Q: One final question before we end this interview. How does it feel working alongside Gordon Solie ever week?

A: Gordon is the best. That's all there is to it, and I'm constantly amazed at his insights and perceptions into the sport. I consider myself lucky to be able to work with him, and I find that each week I learn something new about broadcasting—and about wrestling. □

Wrestling 84

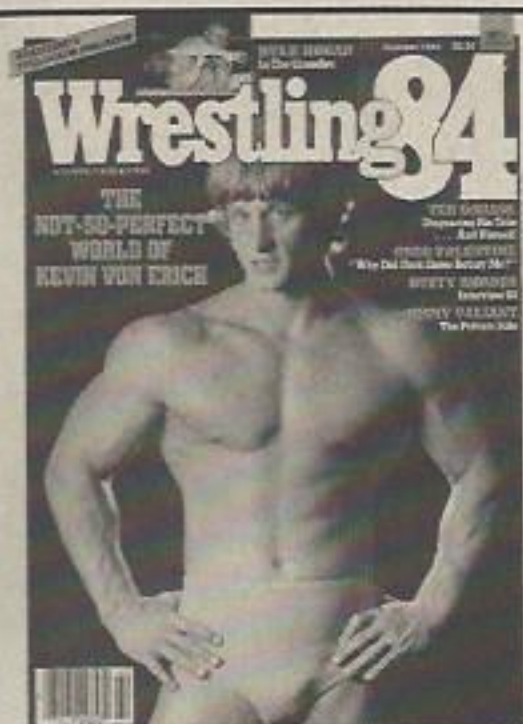
"For Today's Wrestling Fan"

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Wrestling 84

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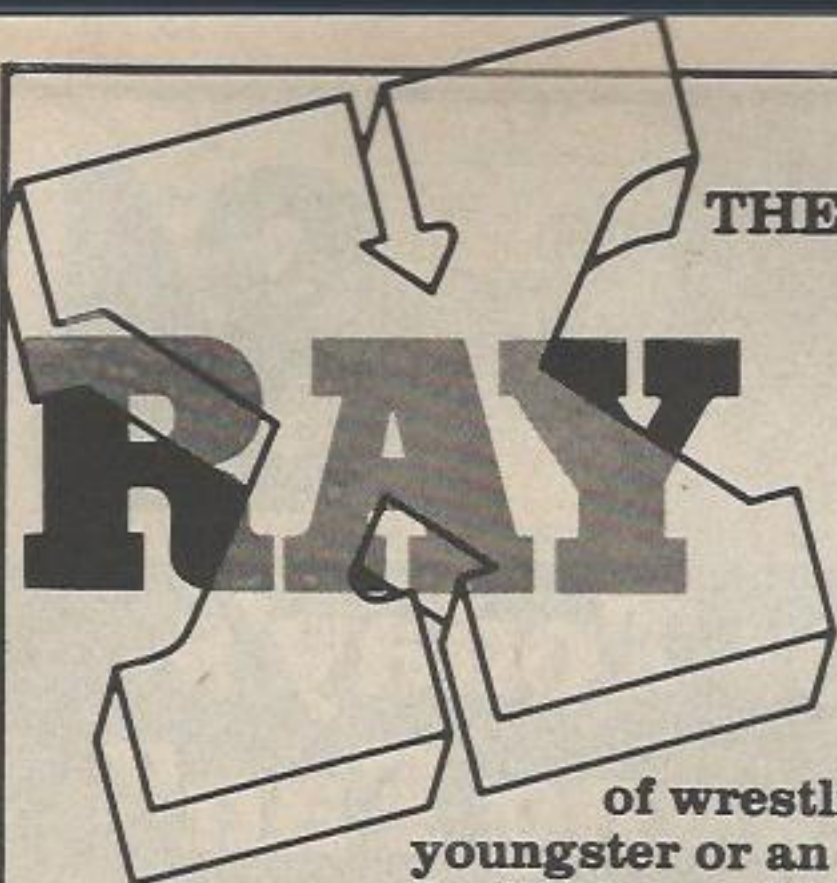


Wrestling 84

Packed With Color Photos Of Wrestling's Biggest Stars!

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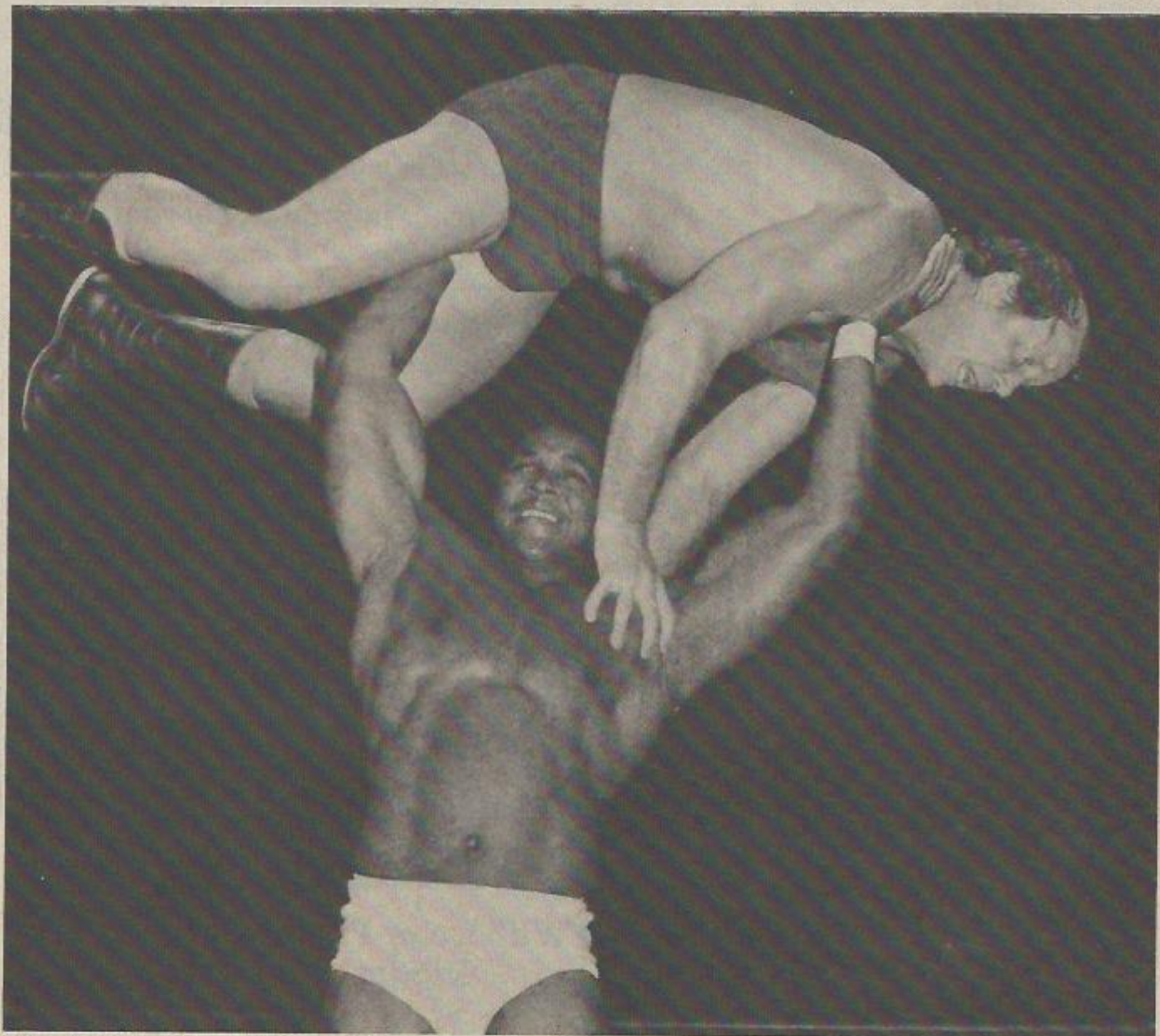
The Best Keeps Getting Better!



THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

HACKSAW BUTCH REED

Each month
THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts
will offer their candid opinions of one
of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming
youngster or an established superstar in his own right,
our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



When Butch Reed broke into wrestling, he was little more than a great athlete who happened to possess enormous strength. But he was eager to learn and willing to listen, and soon, with the generous help of his fellow wrestlers, he advanced to the brink of superstardom. At that point, however, Reed decided that he didn't need his friends anymore. In fact, he turned against the same men who had helped him so much. As a man, Reed lost a lot of respect by turning rulebreaker, but no one lacks respect for this dangerous athlete in the ring.



BRUNO SAMMARTINO

"You can tell just by looking at Butch Reed that he takes his career seriously. He spends a great deal of his time in the gym training, and I've read where he's taken on a nutritionist. He's taking care of his body, because he knows that without it, he loses everything. What I don't understand is why he became a rule-breaker. I guess we all go through changes, but that was one he could have done without."

Bruno Sammartino is known as wrestling's "Living Legend." He is the most-popular wrestler to ever hold the WWF title.



VERNE GAGNE

"What I think is so unique about Reed is that despite his size, he's incredibly agile. He dropkicks, he can do the flying bodypress and the flying shoulder tackle. When you combine his size, his power, and his aerial ability, you have one extremely tough wrestler. And now that Skandor Akbar is managing him, he'll be tougher than ever. I don't agree with Reed's current wrestling philosophy, but you can't doubt his abilities."

Verne Gagne held the AWA title a record 11 times. He was named "Best Scientific Wrestler" of the last 25 years.



GENE KINISKI

"When Butch Reed decided to become a man, when he decided to forget about the fans and the rulebook, he became 10 times the wrestler he used to be. Now that he's on the right track, he can go all the way to the top. He has Skandor Akbar in his corner, who's a great wrestling strategist. The General knows how to utilize all of Reed's power. Together, I think they can beat Ric Flair and take the NWA World title."

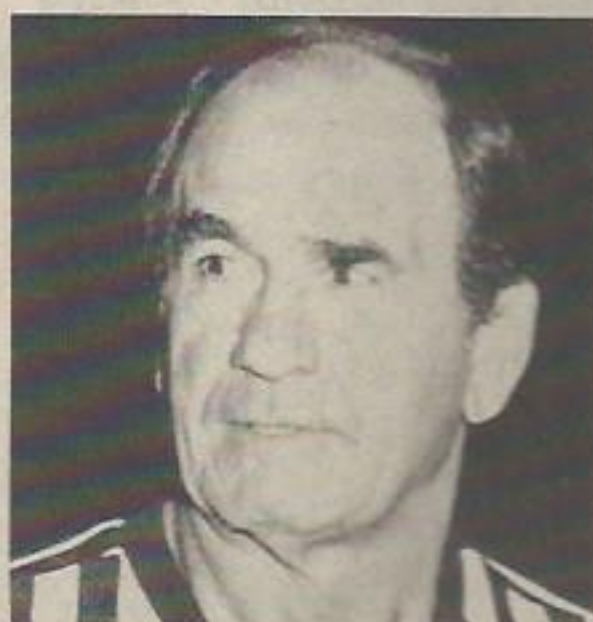
Gene Kiniski is a rugged Canadian who was NWA World champion in the late 1960s.



BUDDY ROGERS

"I'm very disappointed in Butch Reed. He was a fine wrestler and an honorable man, but then he decided to become a rulebreaker. I no longer have any respect for him. I could understand it if he needed the illegal tactics to win matches, but he has enough power and talent to win without breaking the rules. It's a loss, a great loss for the sport of wrestling. Maybe he'll come to his senses. I hope so."

Buddy Rogers is the only man to hold both the NWA World title and the WWF title.



LOU THESZ

"Butch Reed has all the ingredients needed to become one of the greats. He excelled in football and has a lot of natural athletic ability. He just had to stop thinking football and start thinking wrestling. He made the switch pretty well. What I think happened is that somewhere along the line he got insecure about his ability, and that's why he turned rule-breaker. I think he'll switch back sooner or later."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-round wrestler in history.



EDDIE GRAHAM

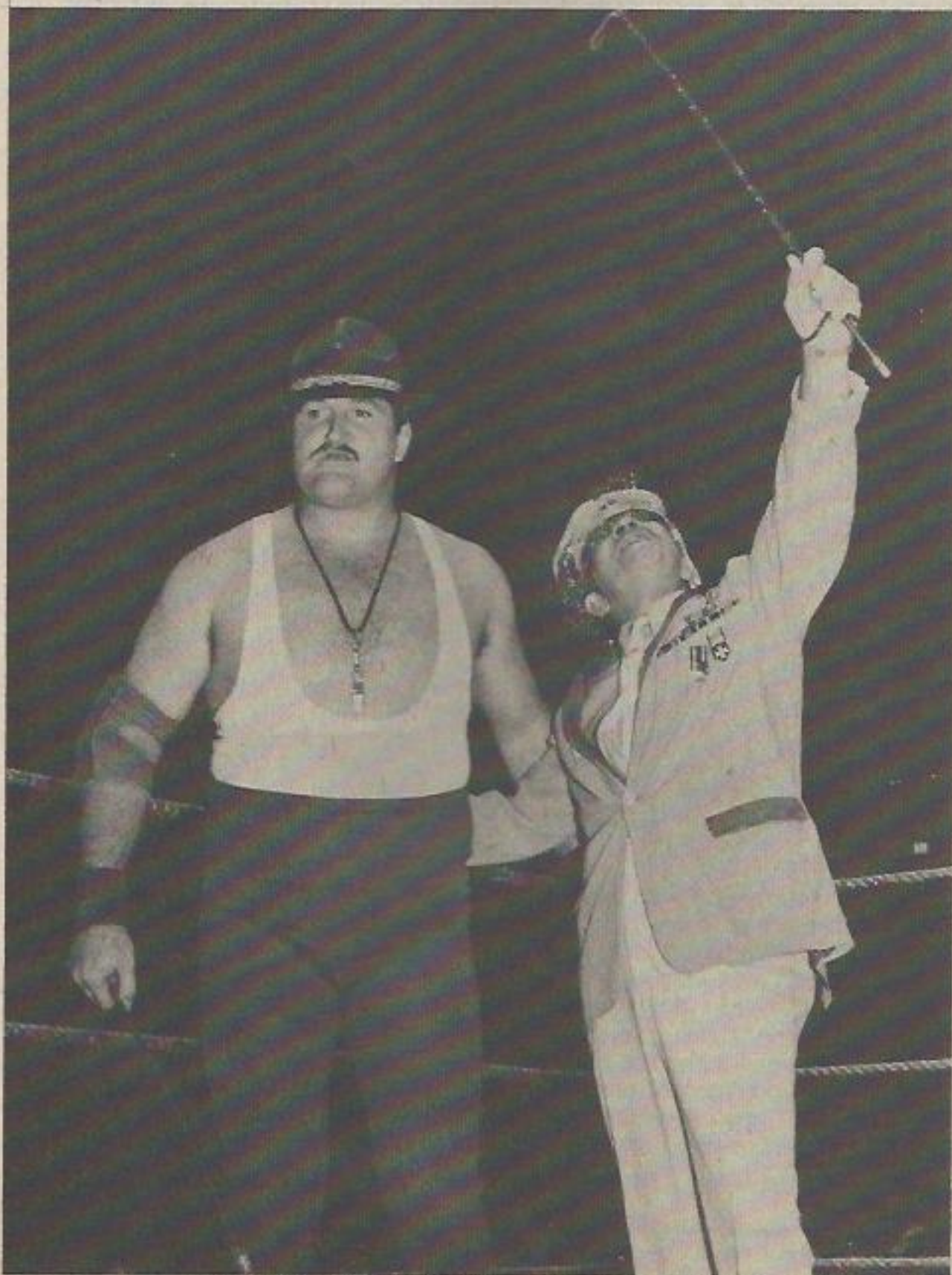
"I've seen Butch Reed progress from the time he was wrestling here in Florida in 1982 to now. I just recently caught a match of his in Dallas. He's a very different man. He seems angry. His style is vicious, and viciousness is not something that can be taught, not even by a man like Gen. Skandor Akbar. I keep wondering what happened to Butch Reed. What could make a man change so drastically?"

Eddie Graham is a former co-holder of the World tag team title, and was a top contender for the NWA World title for more than 20 years.

SPOT ★LIGHTS...

From time to time, *The Wrestler* will shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. These are unforgettable highlights of the sport's greatest stars, compiled by the largest staff of editors and photographers in wrestling journalism

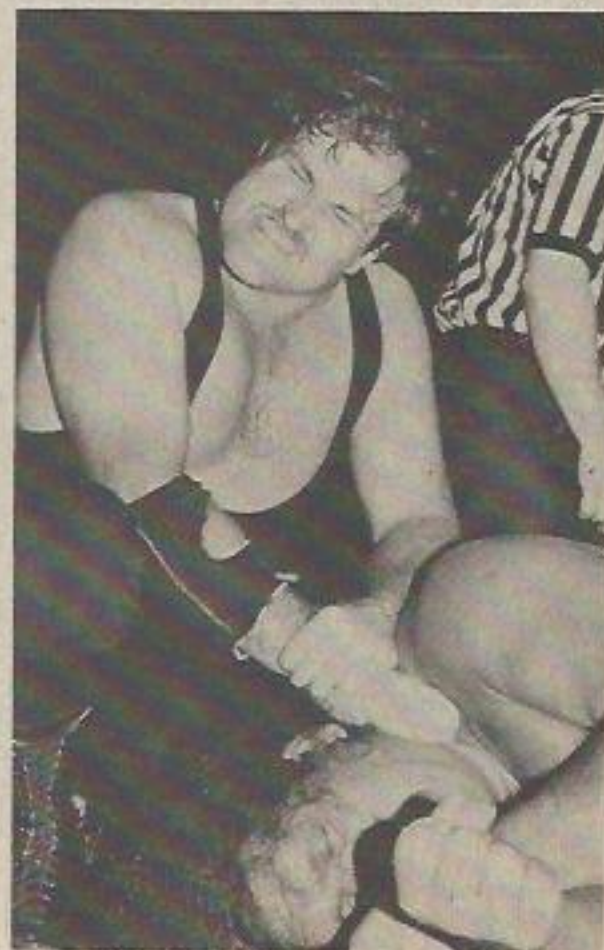
SGT. SLAUGHTER



WHETHER OR NOT you agree or disagree with his tactics, you've got to recognize that Sgt. Slaughter is a proud American.

A former U.S. Marine drill instructor, Slaughter took his penchant for instilling discipline in young Marines and transferred it to the wrestling ring, where he attempts to instill discipline—and the knowledge of defeat—in his opponents. He generally succeeds.

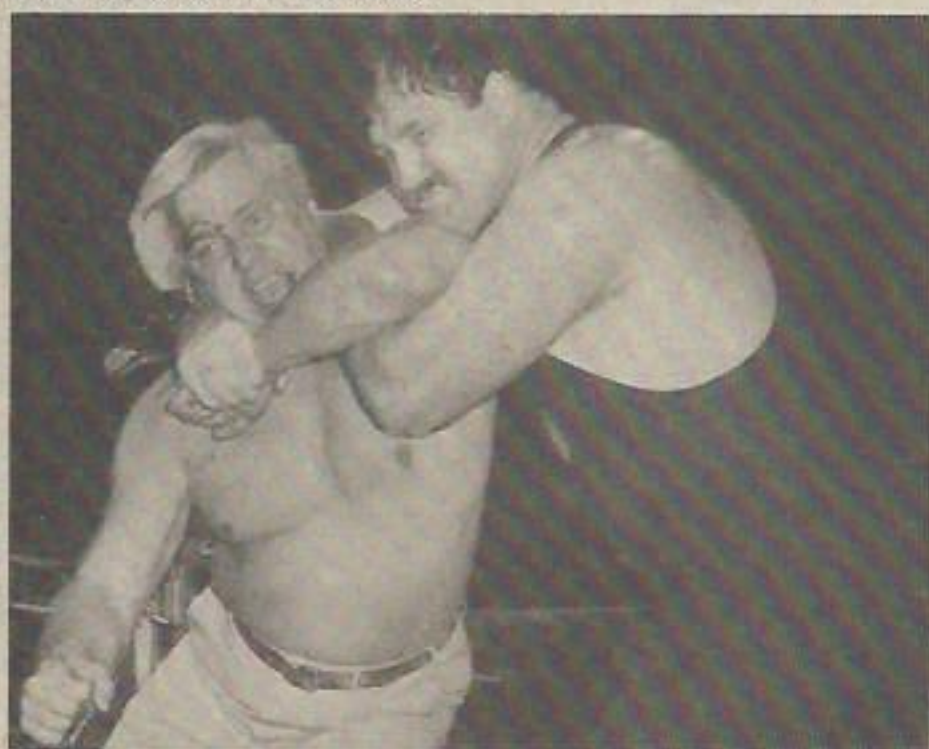
Slaughter sports a rugged style that relies primarily on raw strength and courage. His finishing maneuver is the dreaded cobra clutch hold,



Above left: Sgt. Slaughter's introduction is cheered by at least one man, his manager, The Grand Wizard, who died last year. Above right: Once Slaughter managed to get Andre the Giant to the mat, he was able to secure a lengthy advantage.



Above: Slaughter uses a form of the camel clutch against former AWA champ Otto Wanz in West Germany. Right: The brawl between former Marines Slaughter and Blackjack Mulligan will long be remembered by fans in Toronto. Below: Slaughter applies his famed cobra clutch on Pat Patterson.



a complicated intertwining of his arms around his opponent's neck that few men have been able to counter, and fewer still have been able to withstand.

Slaughter has held the United States heavyweight title on several occasions, and has been NWA World tag team champion, with Don Kernodle as his partner. But his

latest campaign in the world of wrestling has nothing to do with any championship belt.

Slaughter is currently embroiled in a feud with The Iron Sheik, a feud that threatens to grow larger and bloodier than any feud in recent history.

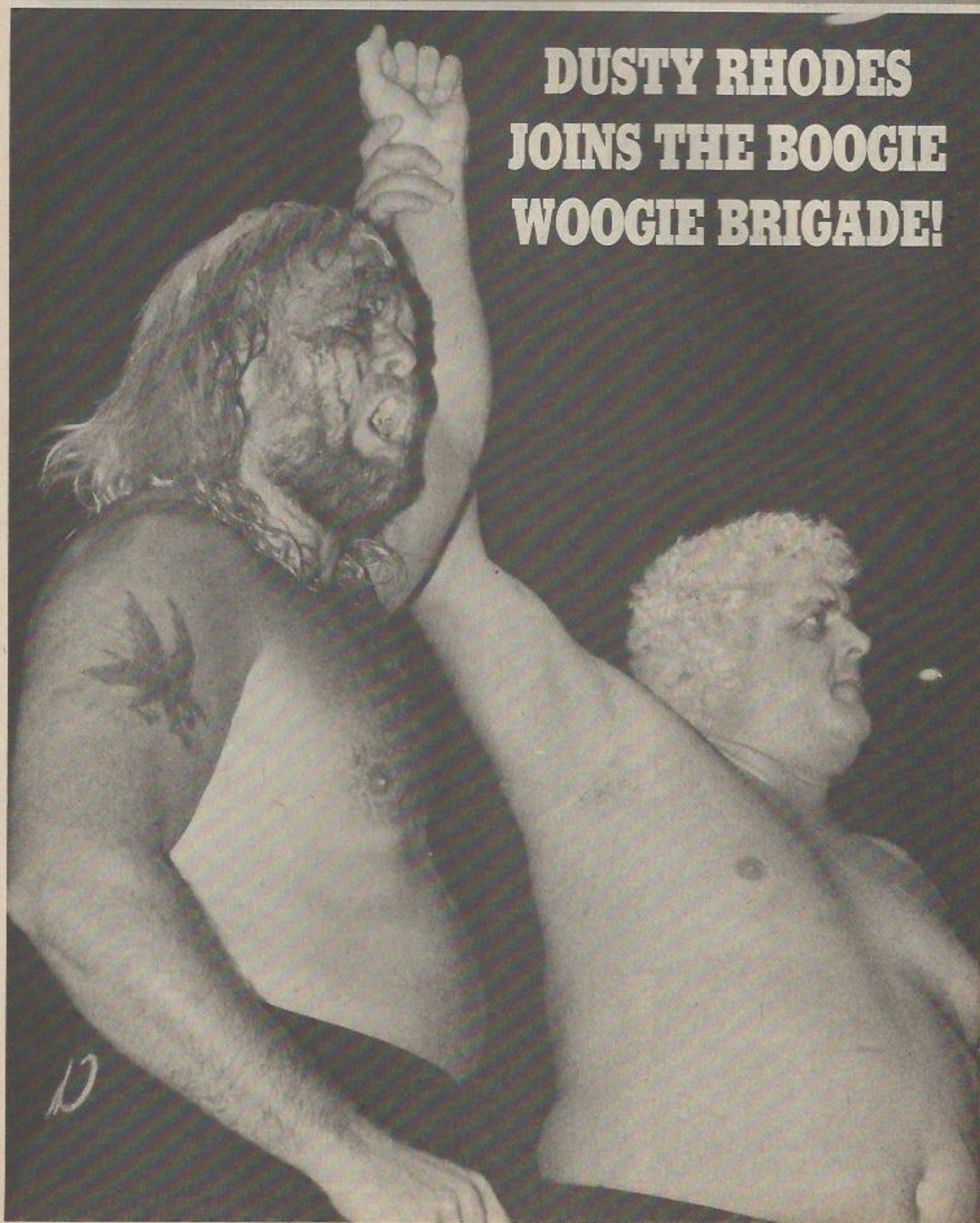
At the heart of the feud is the very issue of patriotism. The Iron

Sheik, a native of Teheran, Iran, is loyal to the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the fanatical dictator of Iran. Slaughter is loyal to the United States, is proud of his Marine service to his country, and despises all that The Iron Sheik stands for.

As 1984 progresses, look for this feud to be the major flashpoint of conflict in the WWF area. □

Jimmy Valiant's American Dream Comes True:

**DUSTY RHODES
JOINS THE BOOGIE
WOOGIE BRIGADE!**

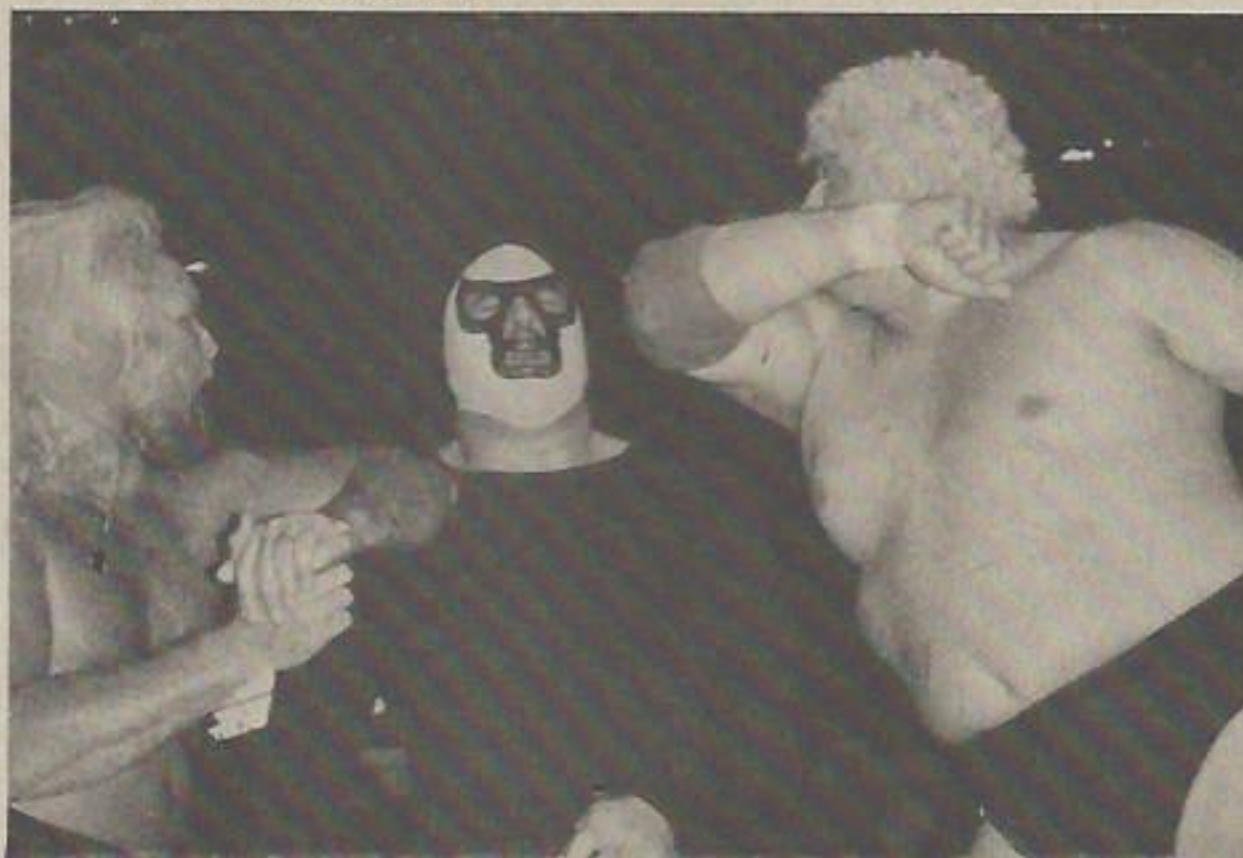


HANGING UP THE PHONE, a jubilant Jim Valiant could't believe his luck. The man he'd always wanted to be his tag team partner had found a way to make it happen. In a week, Dusty Rhodes would be coming to the Mid-Atlantic area to join Valiant in his war against The Assassins.

It was Valiant's American Dream come true at last. He'd been trying for months to get the right combination to batter The Assassins into submission. He'd teamed with such top wrestlers as Dory Funk Jr., Buggy McGraw, Jay Youngblood, and Rick Steamboat. All these athletes had joined what Valiant likes to call his "Boogie Woogie Brigade," tag team partners dedicated to the overthrow of The Assassins and their manager, Paul Jones. As anyone can see from the above list, Valiant had tried all manner of combinations. You can't get a wider variety of tag team partners; no two men are more opposite than Rick Steamboat and Buggy McGraw. Yet Valiant still hadn't found the perfect tag team partner. Now, with the arrival of Dusty Rhodes, he had real hopes.

"This means the end of The Assassins," Valiant announced optimistically. "The end of their reign of terror! I've battered and bloodied them with my other partners. Daddy, now it's time for me to finish them. Even if Paul Jones tries to throw his two cents in, they won't stand a chance. Rhodes is the partner I've always wanted and needed. When he agreed to join me, it was the best thing that ever happened to Mid-Atlantic wrestling!"

It was easy to understand Valiant's jubilation. Not long ago, Jones and The Assassins humiliat-



Valiant and Rhodes throw simultaneous elbows at Assassin II (above). The American Dream drops to his knees under the pressure of a headlock (below).



ed him in the ring, holding him down and shaving off his beard. Rhodes was outraged by the incident.

"I'm not going to sit around and watch trash like Jones and The Assassins do that kind of thing to a

decent man," Dusty said. "Jim Valiant needs help and I'm just the man to give it to him. I've been wanting to wrestle with Jim for months, but my schedule didn't permit it. Now I've done some juggling, made a few promises for the future, and I managed to find time to be Jim's tag team partner. This means the end of The Assassins. I've come to help Jim get revenge and help him save Mid-Atlantic tag team wrestling."

Valiant had waited a long time to hear those words. When Dusty arrived, the man wasn't even given time to unpack. Jim dragged his new tag team partner to the gym immediately. They got to work immediately, two dedicated professionals determined to succeed. Other wrestlers stopped their own training to watch. It was an educational experience for everyone.

In another gym, The Assassins trained under Jones' watchful eye. Those sessions were closed to other wrestlers, a decree Jones never felt the need to issue before. That re-

(Continued on page 56)

Jimmy Valiant desperately needed someone to help him battle Paul Jones' hated Assassins, and that someone came in a dream. In fact, he was The Dream. By the time Dusty Rhodes would leave the Mid-Atlantic, Paul Jones would know that The Assassins would not be permitted to get away with murder

The Nature Boy Is Ready For Broadway

AND NEW YORK IS READY FOR RIC FLAIR!



By Peter King

RIC FLAIR'S LIMOUSINE is both spacious and luxurious. The large seating area has room enough for six people, and includes a telephone, a color television, a video cassette recorder, and a bar.

On this particular occasion, it was only Flair and myself who were enjoying the comforts of success as his limo cruised down Marietta Street in downtown Atlanta.

We crossed Spring Street and, passing the Techwood Viaduct,

paused in front of The Omni complex.

"This is it, Peter, The Omni," Flair said with more than a hint of reverence in his voice. "You know, every time I pause in front of The Omni, I think about all the times I've defended the World title here. Greatness, Peter, greatness in professional wrestling. That's what the NWA World belt stands for, and that's what I stand for."

"The NWA World title is the

most prestigious championship in this sport," Flair continued, "and wrestlers from all over the world have come here, to The Omni, to try and win the title from me. This arena has hosted some classic matches, there's no question about that."

A brief silence was followed by Flair's indication to the driver to move on. We continued what amounted to a tour of Atlanta with Flair acting as tour guide.



Ric Flair has battled the greatest names in wrestling today, but he has never had the opportunity to show off his skills to the New York area fans. The "Nature Boy" enjoys advantages over former NWA titlists Harley Race (above) and Dory Funk Jr. (bottom).

interjected.

Flair broke into a wide grin. "Now you're talking, daddy, that's the city to end all cities," Flair said. "And let me tell you, I can't wait. It's been too long since I've been able to visit New York, and I've never been able to wrestle there. I get a lot of fan mail from people in New York, New Jersey, and thereabouts, but this'll be the first time they'll be able to lay eyes on the greatest wrestler in the world today, the pinnacle of excellence, the NWA World champion. *Whoohoo!* It's going to be exciting!"

Flair was referring to the first card of NWA wrestling to be held in the New York-metropolitan area in 20 years. It will take place on May 29 in the Brendan Byrne Arena in New Jersey's Meadowlands sports complex, just a few miles from midtown Manhattan.

"Oh yeah, I'm ready, I'm ready for this one like I've been ready for no other match in a long time," Flair said. The limousine continued to cruise the streets of downtown Atlanta, but in his own mind, Flair was already strutting down Broadway!

"The scramble is on," Flair con-
(Continued on page 58)

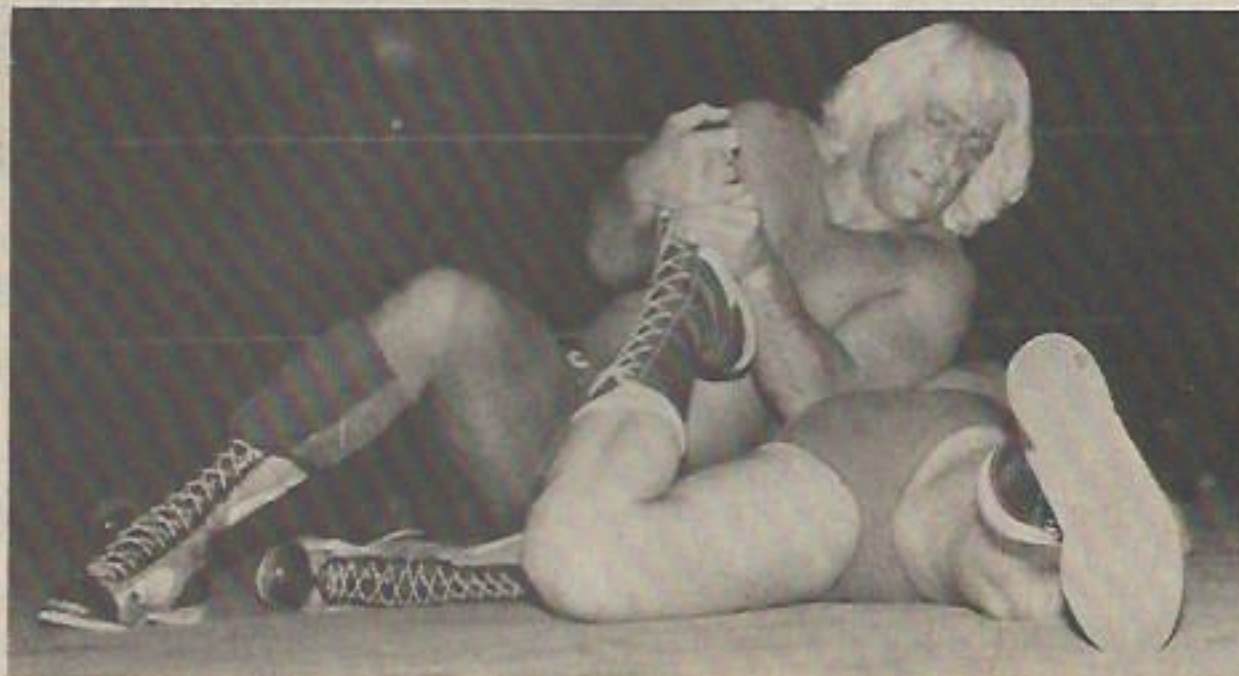
It has the best theaters in the world. It has the best restaurants in the world. It's the world's center for finance and fashion. New York has it all, and now "The Big Apple" prepares itself for the number one wrestler in the world—the NWA World heavyweight champion himself—Ric Flair!

Driving down Peachtree Street, we passed the Hyatt Regency Hotel. "Great restaurant here called 'Clock Of 5's,'" Flair said. "The duckling is sensational. And there's another one in the hotel called 'Hugo's.' Great French food."

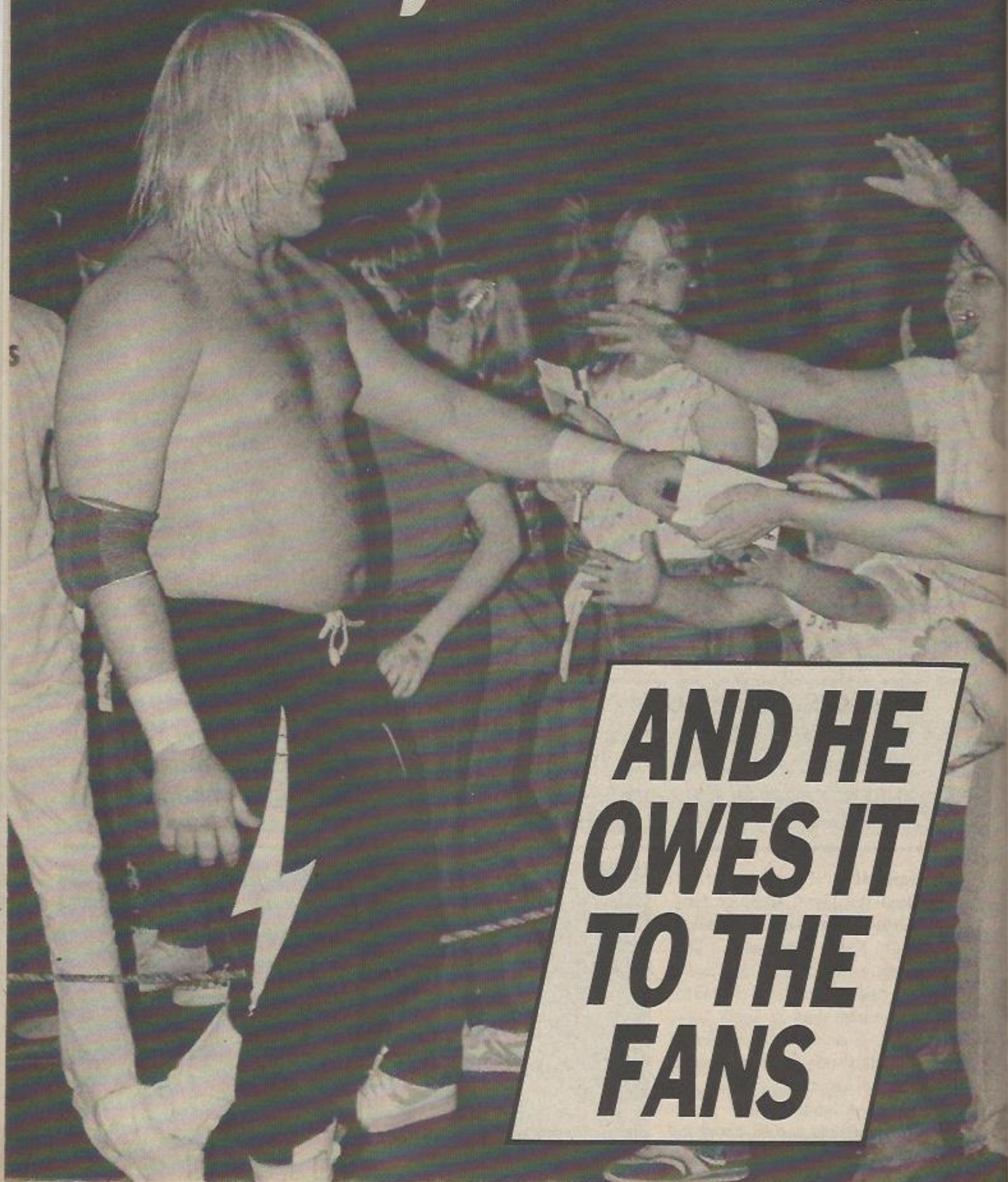
Leaning over to the bar, Flair poured a club soda for himself and a ginger ale for me.

"I love Atlanta," Flair said, "there's something special about it. It's got a personality all its own."

"Not like New York, though," I



Tommy Rich Is Back!



**AND HE
OWES IT
TO THE
FANS**

Tommy Rich was faced with the most difficult decision of his life. He knew there were legal means to bring him back into wrestling, but he wasn't sure if he could justify his return morally. Ultimately, the fans would cast the deciding vote

THE COMMISSIONER PACED in front of his desk. Being one of the most important figures in the Mid-Southern wrestling area, this man was used to getting his way. But sitting in front of him was Tommy Rich. A stubborn Tommy Rich. So far, the commissioner had tried logic, shouting, and pleading. He couldn't get Rich to change his mind.

"Doesn't it bother you that the fans are so unhappy?" the commissioner asked. "Doesn't it hurt you to know how much you're hurting them?"

Rich turned away before saying, "Of course it hurts. The greatest thrill of my life is to hear the fans cheering for me. I've read their letters. Every time someone asks me to return to wrestling it eats away at me. I wish there was something I could do."

"There is!" the commissioner shouted. "Contracts are made to be broken. You could drive a truck through the loopholes in this one. I have a dozen lawyers ready to prove the contract violates laws up and down the line. As a concerned citizen, you should want to break this contract."

Rich said softly, "I signed the contract in good faith. I knew what I was doing. The loser of my match against DiBiase would leave wrestling forever. I entered into the agreement in good faith. I never welched in my life. I don't care if it violates some obscure law. The spirit of the agreement still holds. I won't return to wrestling."

To many, what Rich was saying would seem hypocritical. Although it was never proven, most people believe that after Tommy lost the loser leave wrestling match against Ted DiBiase in Atlanta, he had

come back to wrestle under a mask as Mr. R. One source, a close observer of the Georgia scene who asked to remain anonymous, said that Tommy had had second thoughts about using the Mr. R identity and he was being sincere in now saying that he would honor the terms of his match with DiBiase.

"Tommy, you're just being selfish!" the commissioner snarled. "You and your high-and-mighty principles. It doesn't matter to you how many people are hurt, as long as you can maintain that noble posture. Think about this for a minute. There are times when things aren't simply right or wrong. There are times when tough choices have to be made, when the common good in the long run has to be considered. Maybe some principles have to be bent, maybe some compromises have to be made. And just maybe somebody's reputation has to get a little tarnished. Think about those letters from the fans. Think about their petitions begging you to come back. Think about what you mean to them, how few heroes people have in their lives these days. And think about wrestling, whether or not it will be a better sport because you're in it. Get off the pedestal, Tommy, and start thinking about someone else."

Rich was visibly upset by the time the commissioner had finished his speech. Tommy's jaw worked furiously, as if he were trying to say something. When the words wouldn't come, the young grappler stood up and stormed out of the room.

That night, Tommy reread the letters and petitions asking him to come back to wrestling. His mind



During one of the first matches after his return, in Memphis, Rich staggers Bruise Brother Porkchop Cash. Tommy seems overwhelmed by the fans' outpouring of affection for him as he approaches the ring (opposite page). Had it not been for the fans, Tommy would have left wrestling forever.

filled with the faces of fans he remembered cheering him to victory. It's a gift, Tommy realized, to make people happier in this world. He was blessed with that gift. Did he have the right not to use that gift as it was intended? As he glanced once again over the letters, he wondered.

He then called up friends. As Brad Armstrong recalls, "It wasn't really a conversation. I was on the phone for half an hour and all I got to say was hello and goodbye. Tommy just spilled his guts, arguing with himself. Did he have the right to return? Did he have the right not to return? I tried to say something but couldn't get a word in edgewise. He was the most tormented man I ever heard. When our conversation was over, it was impossible to tell what he decided. All I knew was that if he did return, it would definitely be in the Mid-

(Continued on page 64)

The Experts Agree: MIKE VON ERICH WILL BE A SUPERSTAR

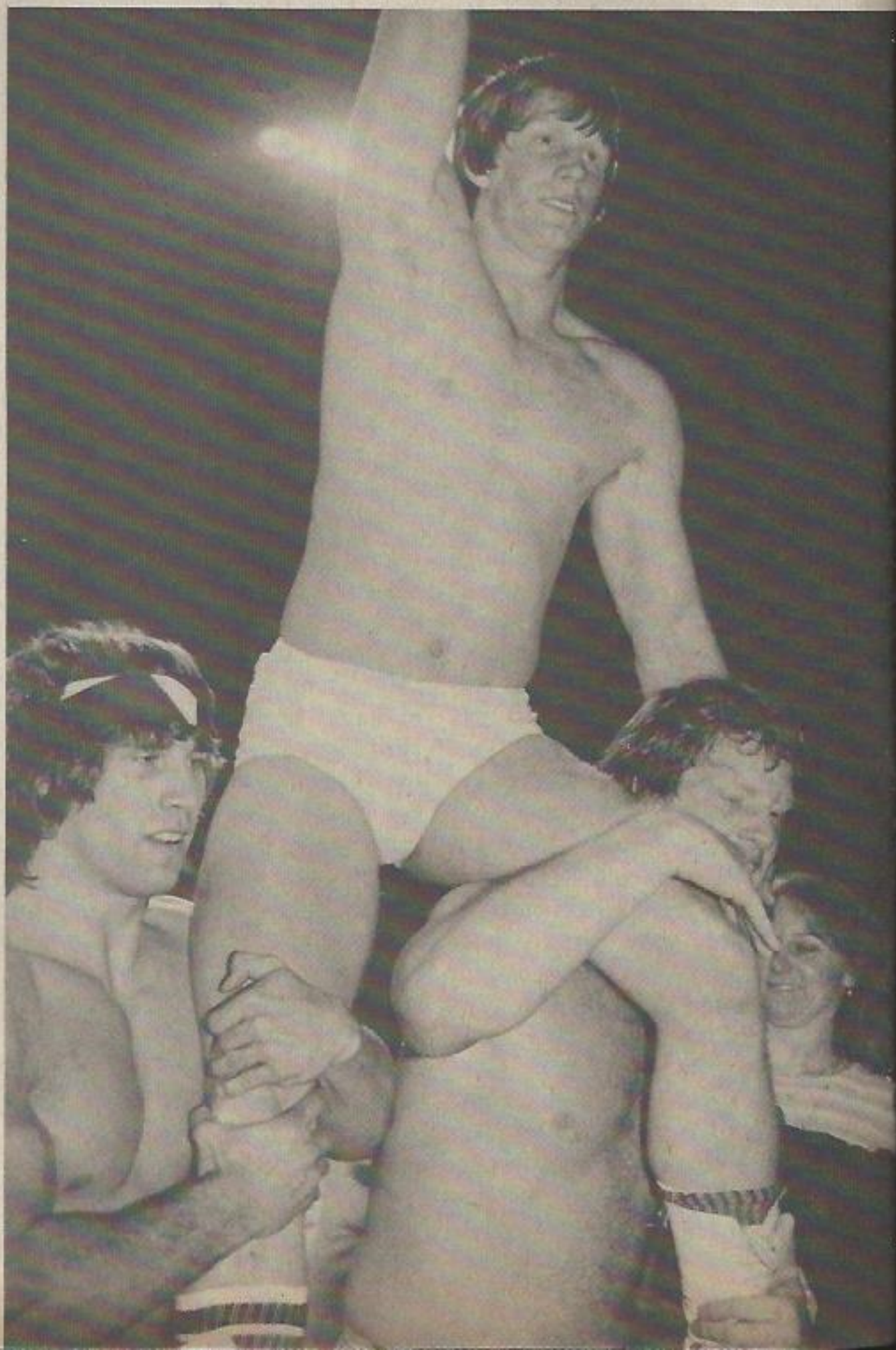
Like a flash of lightning, Mike Von Erich has slashed through the wrestling scene to become one of the sport's brightest superstars. The experts agree he's one of the great ones. But there is one person who openly disagrees with the experts—Mike Von Erich himself!

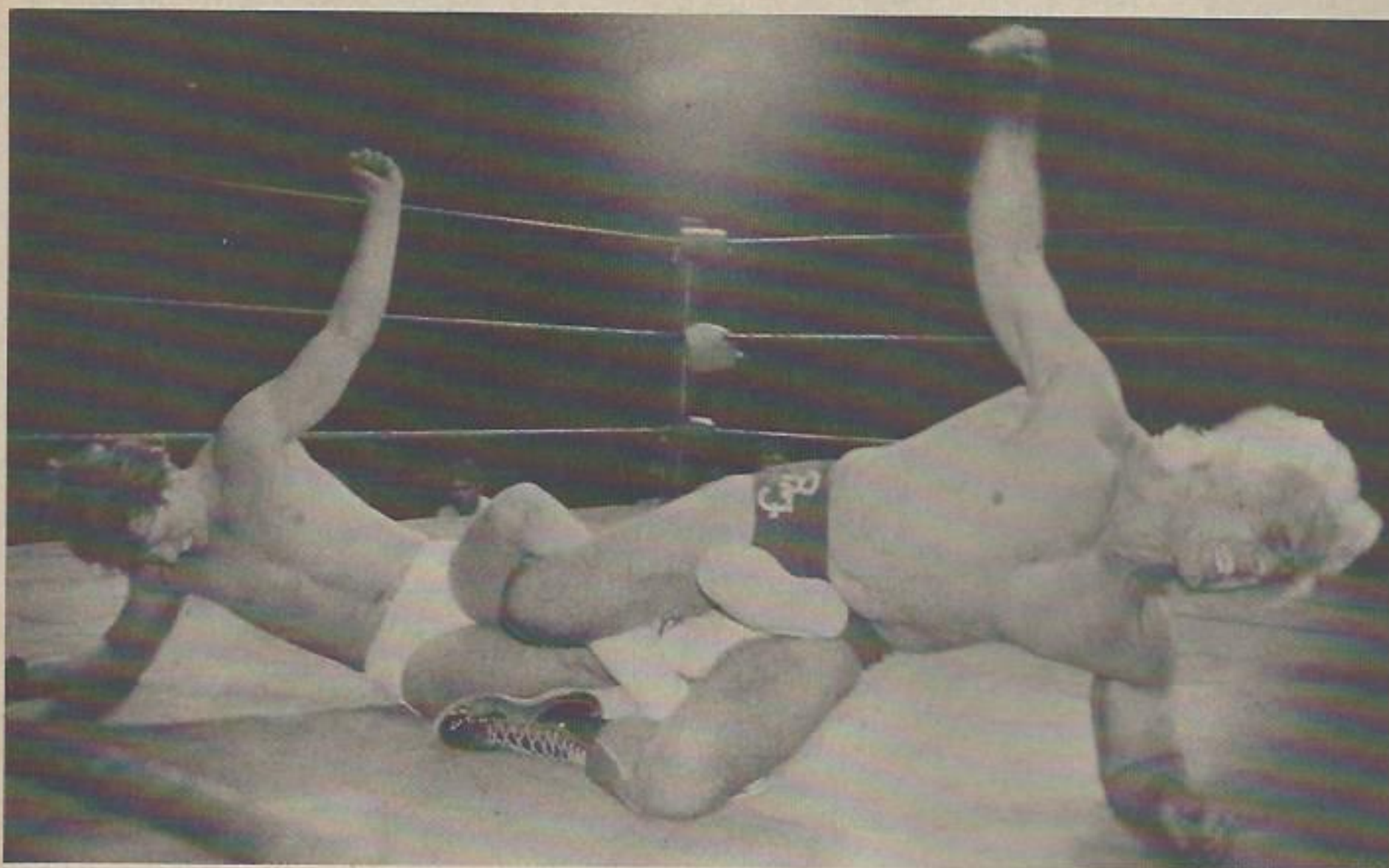
Photos by Buddy Myers

YOU CAN SPOT the great ones instantly. They naturally move with more confidence, grace, and physical assurance. Born with great instincts, they are driven to forge their gifts into an art form. This is true in all walks of life. They establish themselves early and never disappoint.

Another trait they all have in common is their inability to be satisfied. Forced by fate to strive for an impossible perfection, they constantly strive to become better. Even after their greatest accomplishments, the best will always think about what went wrong and how to prevent it from happening again. They are in a constant war with human fallibility. It's a war they know they can't win, but it's the only one worth fighting.

Mike Von Erich, the youngest of the Von Erich brothers, has been waging that war ever since he was a child. Brother Kerry recalls, "When we'd see our dad, Fritz Von Erich, wrestle, the older brothers were enthralled by his abilities. Not Mike. He couldn't have been 10 the first time he started rattling off Dad's mistakes after a match. At first, Dad thought it was cute. The cuteness wore off when he realized Mike was right. He couldn't get angry at Mike, but it must be hard to have a little kid correctly lecture you about your mistakes. Dad handled it real well. He discussed





Ric Flair begins to feel the pain as his figure-four leglock is reversed by Von Erich (above). Mike rushes to the aid of his partner, Chris Adams, who had just suffered a beating at the hands of Buddy Roberts and Michael Hayes (below). Von Erich controls Roberts (right). Mike celebrates a victory with his brother Kerry and his late brother, David (opposite left).



things with Mike as if he were an equal. They had serious discussions that lasted for over an hour. The other brothers would join sometimes. I think it's those discussions that convinced us to become wrestlers. As the Bible says, 'A little child shall lead them.' "

Experts believe Mike, no longer a little child, will someday lead wrestling with a world heavy-weight championship. Already,

he's worked his way into that small group of men deserving to be called superstars. Wrestling journalists don't dub someone a superstar easily; they almost never consider one as young as Mike to fall into that category. But Mike, seemingly from the age of 10, has always been special. The only person who doesn't believe Mike Von Erich to be a superstar is Mike Von Erich himself.



• Billy Jack's Own Story •

Part II

"HOW PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING SAVED MY LIFE!"

In part one of this story, last month, Billy Jack wrote about his youth. About his close-knit family. About his determination to become a boxer. Everything in Billy Jack's life was going so smoothly.

Then tragedy struck: Billy's uncle, who lived with his family all his life, died in April 1969 when Billy was 15. His mother died less than two weeks later.

Soon after, Billy quit high school, quit boxing, and began hanging around the wrong people. His father felt a stint in the Army might help, but Billy went AWOL soon after signing up.

Billy's father became blind in the left eye and then the right, and Billy took a job as a janitor. Billy began gambling heavily and getting into streetfights. One particular fight led to an appearance before a judge, who found him guilty of first-degree assault charges.

Billy received a five-year jail sentence.

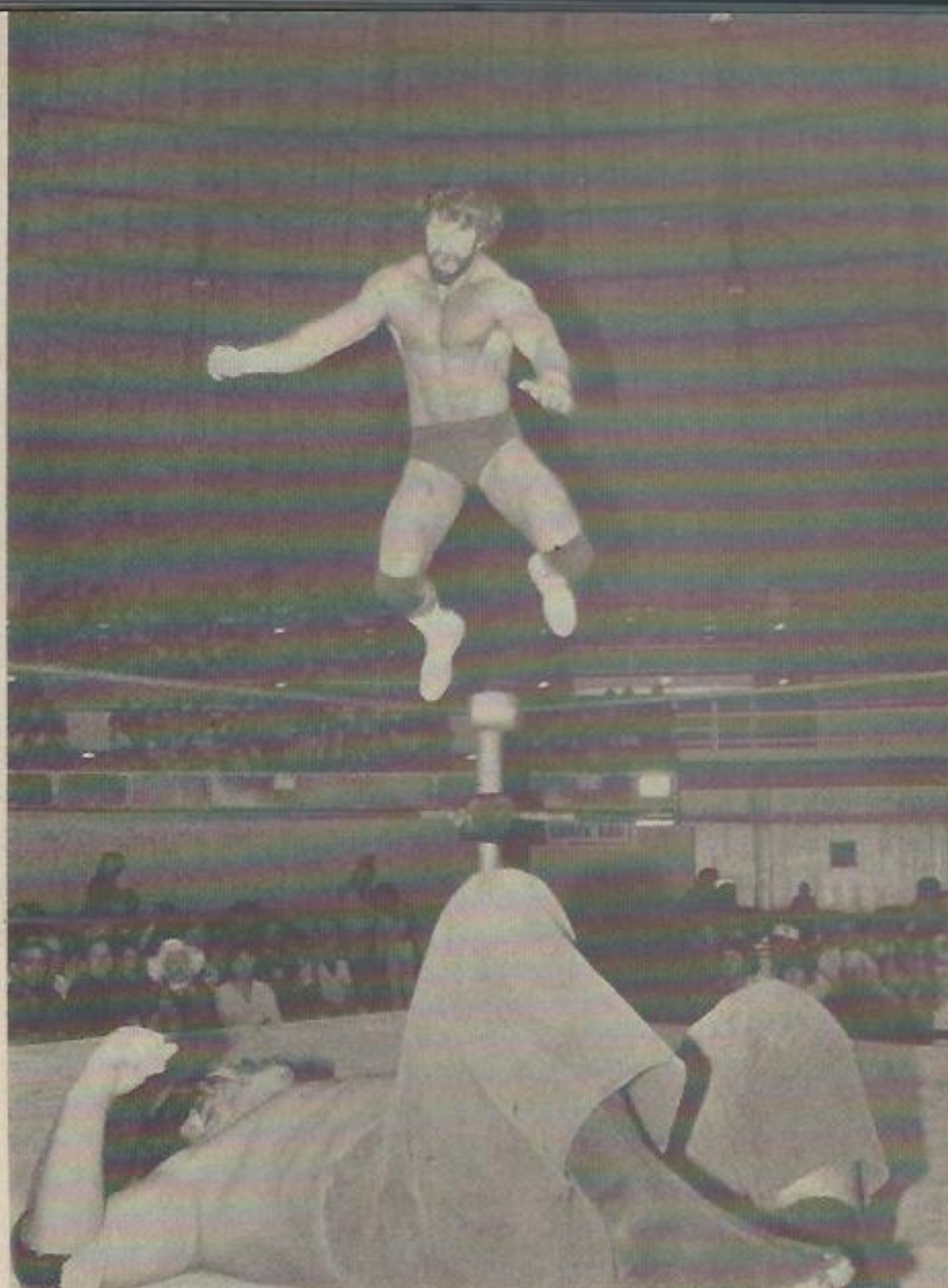
By Billy Jack

I SPENT NEARLY two years in prison, and all I did was lift weights. It was an experience, man!

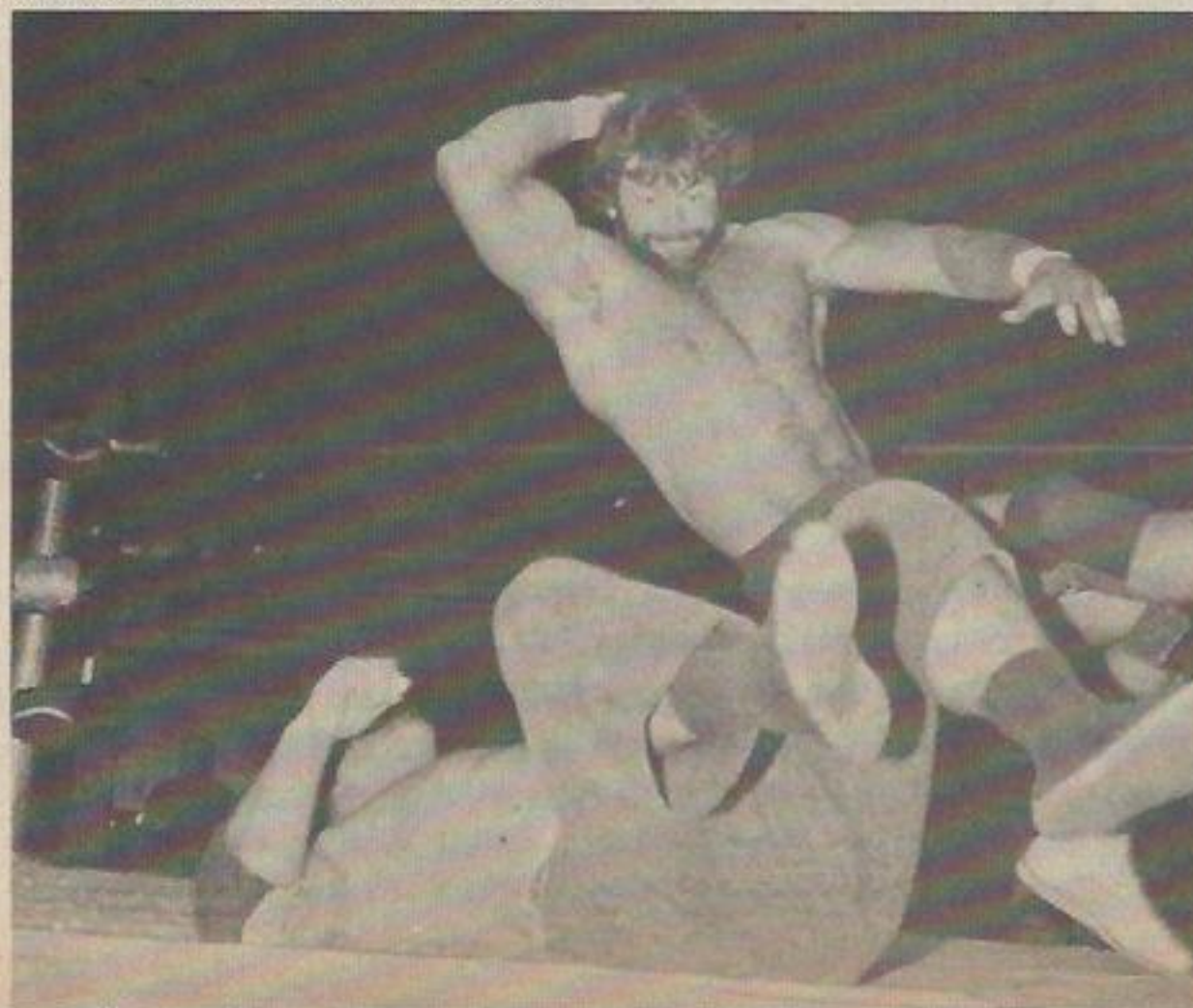
At the age of 26 I was paroled on a YMCA work-release program. My family greeted me with love. My dad was on retirement income, and my brothers had jobs. But I was just nothing, as far as I was concerned.



This is the continuation of a remarkable tale of personal strength. In it, you'll meet Billy Jack as he was before he entered professional wrestling: a misguided youth, a victim of incredible tragedy, a man who lacked self-confidence—and an incredible athlete who found his true calling in life



With his willingness to take chances and his enormous strength, Billy Jack was a natural for pro wrestling. Billy springs toward Kendo Nagasaki from the tumbuckles (above) and hits the Japanese star with an elbowsmash (below). Hacksaw Duggan will be the victim of a thudding Billy Jack bodyslam (top right).



Then one day I sat down and talked to myself. I said: "Start thinking big."

I started playing racquetball, and I continued to lift weights. At the age of 27 I won the YMCA Open Racquetball tournament. That was exciting for me.

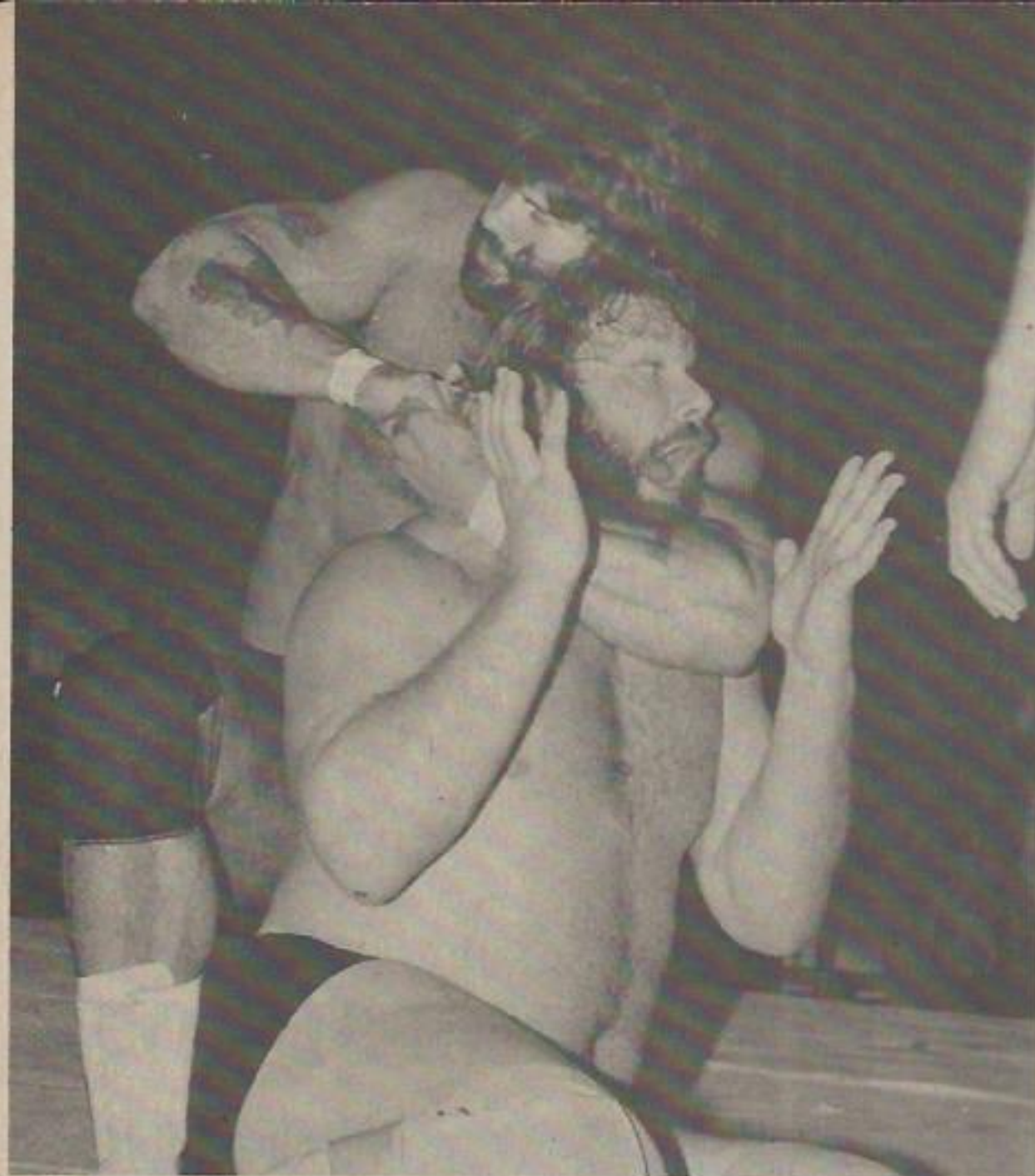
Then, one Saturday night, I was watching a professional wrestling program on television. Our family always used to watch wrestling together, and while I was watching the show, something in my head clicked.

I wanted to become a pro wrestler. I knew that I could become a success if I gave it everything I had.

My plan was first to pump up on the weights. I entered the Mr. Pacific Coast bodybuilding competition, and it was there that I met Don Owen, the promoter in Portland, Oregon. I talked to him and very sincerely said, "Mr. Owen, I want to become a professional wrestler. Can you help me?"

The Mr. Pacific Coast competition was nine months away, and I trained four hours each day, six days a week. I never missed a workout. I lived in the gym. People saw the results. They saw that I wanted to win, and I knew that I wanted to win. For the first time in my life since I was 13, I knew what I wanted. I was a little older now, and smarter than ever.

The contest was held in March



Duggan complains that Billy Jack's chinlock is a choke, but it obviously is not (above). Billy is in marvelous shape and works hard to stay that way. He can often be found in Florida health food stores (right).

I won the Pacific Northwest heavyweight title from The Dynamite Kid and held it until I left for Florida to see Dusty Rhodes.

The reason I left Portland to meet Dusty—and I want all my Pacific Northwest fans to understand this—is because he comes



1982, and I won. Half of my dream was fulfilled. The next Saturday I went to the arena and got to talk with Don Owen again. He liked my attitude and felt I had a good wrestling physique.

"I'm a good judge of character," he said. "I think I'll give you a chance, but understand, you're the only one I've ever done this for."

Don sent me to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, to start training with Stu Hart. I had \$300 to my name when I got there.

There were a lot of big, tough guys there. They stretched my abilities from here to Sunday. I never cried or gave in, though there were times I wanted to—I knew that this was my last chance in life.

After two weeks, Stu took me aside and told me I was going to make it. I was 6'3", 255 pounds, rock-hard, and ready. I had my

first match in August 1982, against the rugged top contender, Duke Myers, and wrestled him to a 15-minute draw.

After two more months, I went to Portland, and it was like a dream come true. Standing in that ring was just amazing! My entire family was there, and my dad was so proud. All the love and dreams that I had searched for came at 29 years of age.

Professional wrestling is the best thing that ever happened to me and my family. My dad went to the matches with me, and on one television interview, my dad was there and we embraced and expressed our love for each other. My brother never missed one of my matches in Portland.

I teamed with Stan Stasiak, and we won the Pacific Northwest tag team belts one month after my debut.

from the streets, too. He knows what it's like to be down to the very bottom of life, to have a dream, and to finally achieve it.

I think big. I want to be world champion some day. Dusty made it by raw determination, blood, and guts. So far, since I've come to Florida, Dusty has helped me in so many ways. I love the man so much.

Now I hope the readers of this magazine, all my fans everywhere, can understand and see why wrestling has brought my life and my family back together again.

It's the toughest profession in the world, but like they say, "no pain, no gain." And I want the people to know where I'm coming from—my family already knows—and that's why I wrote this story.

As long as I'm in professional wrestling, I'll always remain Billy Jack—"The People's Choice!" □

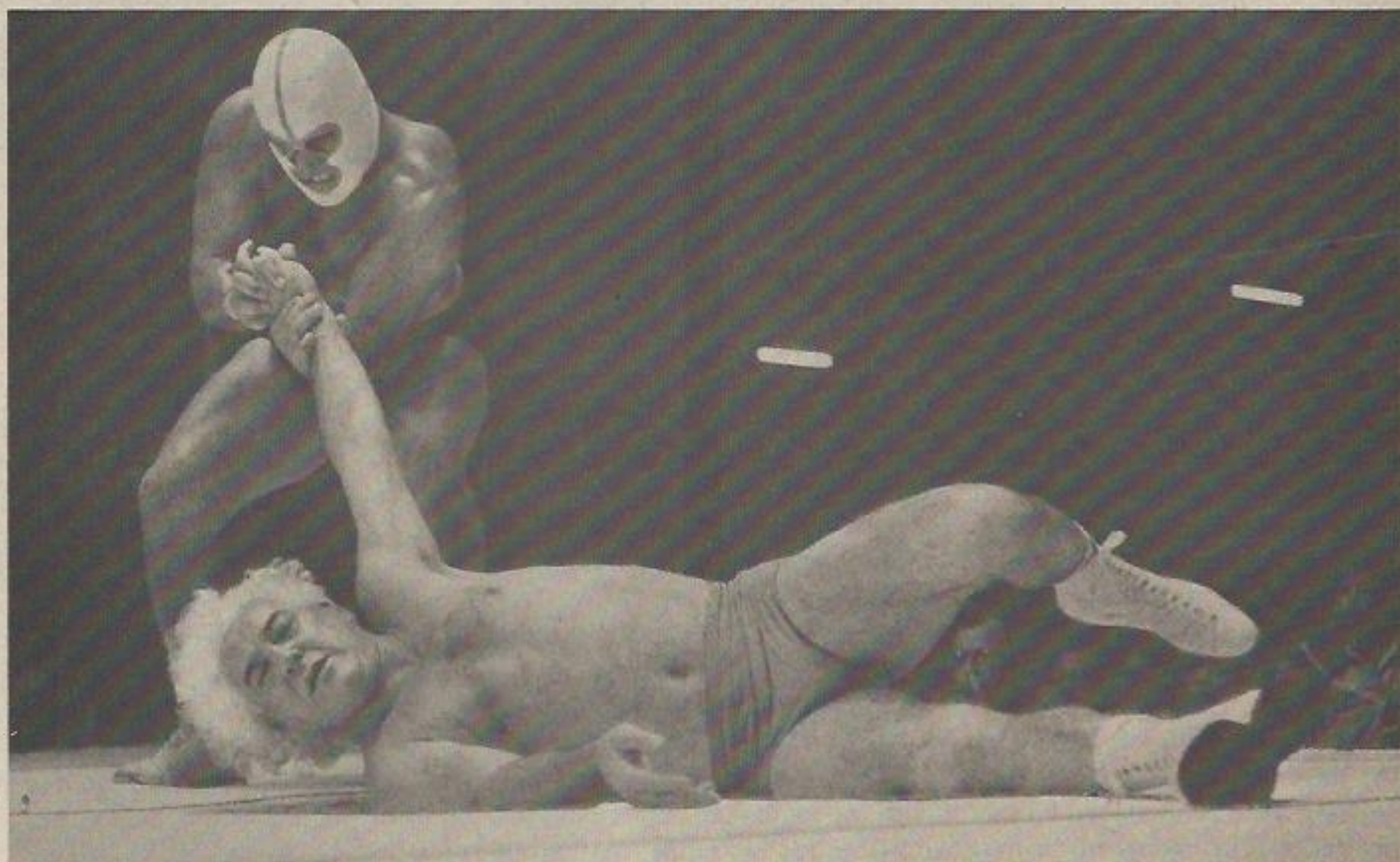
MATT BROCK'S



LOOKING BACK

NOVEMBER 7, 1962

GORGEIOUS GEORGE VS. THE DESTROYER



AND JIM GARVIN thinks *he's* gorgeous?

No, Gorgeous George was the original king of conceit. It's common knowledge that Muhammad

Ali patterned his fast-talking braggart style after that of Gorgeous George. Perfume in the ring, valets bowing and scraping at his feet... George was the original. Since his

heyday, he's been often imitated, but never duplicated.

I can't imagine a greater contrast to George than The Destroyer. Rugged and tough, The Destroyer de-



Opposite page: Concentrating his attack on Gorgeous George's left arm, The Destroyer was able to weaken his foe and win their hair vs. mask match. Above left: The Destroyer celebrates his victory as George calmly prepares to have his hair clipped. Above right: George's famed blond locks come off clump by clump. Right: Though understandably depressed, Gorgeous George became baldheaded without a protest.

spised everything that George represented.

Their differences finally reached a head in November 1962 in Los Angeles. It was a mask vs. hair match, and the fever that built up among the fans was incredible. After all, who could imagine Gorgeous George without those blond tresses caressing his shoulders? And what would happen to The Destroyer's career after the mystery of his identity was solved?

With so much at stake in this match, both wrestlers vowed to battle until they dropped from exhaustion. Referee Johnny "Red Shoes" Dugan was given the assignment of trying to maintain control.

This match was one of the classics. The Destroyer focused his attack on George's left arm throughout, and the strategy worked to perfection.

When they raised The Destroyer's hands in victory, the crowd went wild with anticipation—Gorgeous George was going to lose his

gorgeous hair!

I remember sitting in the cheap seats in the Olympic Auditorium and thinking, "Oh hell, it's going to be like a battle royal when they try and cut off George's hair. This is going to be a mess!"

I remember seeing two men in suits and ties and pencil-thin moustaches—damned if I can remember who they were—climb into the ring bearing combs, scissors, razors, and a bag to hold the hair.

And I remember seeing Gorgeous George just sitting there—doing nothing! I was amazed! He didn't flinch an inch. I was certain that he was going to go crazy any minute. He didn't. He just sat there and let them cut his hair. Then he sat there and let them shave him bald.

Go figure it. I would have bet the whole paycheck that he wouldn't have let them touch him. But he did, and they did, and the next thing I knew Gorgeous George was slick as a cue ball.



And this was the man who primped and preened, who had his valets spritz the ring with perfume so he didn't have to smell the sweat and stench from the previous match. The man who was fussy about himself beyond all reasonable belief.

And he let them cut his hair without so much as a gripe or a growl. It was probably Gorgeous George's most uncharacteristic moment ever in professional wrestling! □

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Ratings scrapbook: We thought it might be interesting to compare this month's ratings for the three major federations—NWA, AWA, and WWF—with those of one, five, and 10 years ago. So we did. After examining the ratings on pages 46 and 47 with those in the July 1983, July 1979, and July 1974 issues of *The Wrestler*, here's what we came up with:



Heenan & Bockwinkel

● Only one man—Nick Bockwinkel—was rated in his respective federation (the AWA) in all four years. In 1974, he was rated number seven (the AWA World champion back then was Verne Gagne); in 1979 and 1983, Bockwinkel held the AWA title; this month, Bockwinkel drops to the number two spot behind Jumbo Tsuruta and Blackjack Lanza. Remarkably, Harley Race, who began his first of seven NWA

World title reigns in 1973, appears in only three of the four months we looked at. (In the July 1983 issue, Race was not rated at all in the NWA.)

● Of the 10 men rated behind NWA World champion Jack Brisco in 1974, three would go on to win that coveted title—Harley Race (who won his second NWA title, from Terry Funk, on February 6, 1977), Terry Funk (who defeated Jack Brisco for the title on December 10, 1975), and Dusty Rhodes (who defeated Harley Race on August 21, 1979, and again on June 21, 1981, for his two title reigns). A fourth man in that top 10 was a former NWA champion—Dory Funk Jr.—who had defeated Gene Kiniski on February 11, 1969, for the title, and defended the belt successfully for more than four years.

● Of the eight individuals who have held the WWF heavyweight title since its inception in 1963, four were ranked in the 1974 ratings and are still wrestling today: Ivan Koloff (rated number five in the AWA in 1974 behind then-champion Verne Gagne), Pedro Morales (number one in the WWF in 1974 behind then-champion Bruno Sammartino), Stan Stasiak (number five in the WWF in 1974), and Superstar Billy Graham (number one in the AWA in 1974).

● If you look at the NWA, AWA, and WWF categories for each year, add together the number of former champions and champions-to-be (up to March 28, 1984), you'll see that the number has decreased over the past decade (this is considering only the NWA and AWA World titles, plus the

WWF heavyweight title): 11 in 1974, nine in 1979, and eight in both 1983 and this month's ratings. Does this mean that the average quality of wrestling in general has decreased in the past 10 years? Let us know what you think.

Looking at the junior heavyweights: In Craig Peters' "On The Road" column in the May 1984 issue of our sister publication *Inside Wrestling*, Alabama State junior heavyweight champion Mike Jackson said that "wrestling fans should be aware of the junior heavyweight division. We've got some excellent athletes in our division."



Les Thornton

We agree. Some of the sport's most versatile athletes can be found among the junior heavyweights. For the most part they are practitioners of the scientific style of wrestling. The faster action necessitates the development of more complex defenses that can counter that speed. The key word that seems to characterize the junior heavyweights is "versatility."

Take NWA junior heavyweight champion Les Thornton, for example. Known as "the man of a thousand holds," Thornton is a master of the scientific style of wrestling, but when the match gets a little tough, he's right in there brawling if he has to. We rate him number one among the junior heavyweights competing in the world today.

Number two on our list is Buck Zumhofe, holder of the AWA junior heavyweight title. Zumhofe is a dynamic competitor who has impressed many observers around the world with his distinct aerial style.

The other eight junior heavyweights on our top 10 list are as follows: 3—Hector Guerrero, 4—Mike Graham, 5—Tommy Rogers, 6—Eddie Gilbert, 7—Tim Horner, 8—Mike Jackson, 9—Mike Von Erich, 10—Dennis Brown.

The address for mail: We look forward to your comments on our ratings system, and on "Ratings Analysis." Did you enjoy this issue's "Ratings Scrapbook"? Do you have ideas and suggestions for future installments of "Ratings Analysis"? Send comments to: "Ratings Analysis" c/o *The Wrestler*, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571.

OFFICIAL WRESTLING

Ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. These ratings are compiled by the editors and are universally recognized as official.



Ric Flair



Jumbo Tsuruta



Dino Bravo

TOP 10

- 1—RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—ANDRE THE GIANT
497, Grenoble, France
- 3—HARLEY RACE
253, Kansas City, MO
- 4—HULK HOGAN
320, Venice Beach, CA
- 5—DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX

- 6—CARLOS COLON
238, Bayamon, Puerto Rico
- 7—JUMBO TSURUTA
240, Tokyo, Japan
- 8—DICK SLATER
235, Tampa, FL
- 9—KERRY VON ERICH
251, Denton, TX
- 10—DINO BRAVO
248, Montreal, Quebec

TAG TEAMS

- 1—WAHOO McDANIEL & MARK YOUNGBLOOD
NWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 490 pounds
- 2—KEN PATERA & CRUSHER BLACKWELL
AWA World tag team champions
Combined weight: 730 pounds
- 3—THE ROAD WARRIORS
National tag team champions
Combined weight: 567 pounds
- 4—THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS
Mid-South tag team champions
Combined weight: 483 pounds
- 5—ROCKY JOHNSON & TONY ATLAS
WWF tag team champions
Combined weight: 491 pounds
- 6—SUPER DESTROYERS I & II
World Class American tag team champions
Combined weight: 542 pounds
- 7—BARRY WINDHAM & MIKE ROTONDO
U.S. tag team champions
Combined weight: 475 pounds
- 8—TOMMY RICH & EDDIE GILBERT
Mid-Southern tag team champions
Combined weight: 460 pounds
- 9—KING TONGA & EL GRAN APOLLO
World Wrestling Council tag team champions
Combined weight: 482 pounds
- 10—PIERRE LEBEVRE & FRENCHY MARTIN
Canadian International tag team champions
Combined weight: 481 pounds

NWA and AWA ratings are compiled with the assistance of wrestlers, promoters, and reporters. "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices.

MOST POPULAR

- 1—ANDRE THE GIANT
497, Grenoble, France
- 2—DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX
- 3—JIMMY VALLANT
251, New York, NY
- 4—HULK HOGAN
320, Venice Beach, CA
- 5—JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
- 6—KERRY VON ERICH
251, Denton, TX
- 7—JUNKYARD DOG
260, New Orleans, LA
- 8—SGT. SLAUGHTER
310, Parris Island, SC
- 9—BARRY WINDHAM
230, Sweetwater, TX
- 10—BLACKJACK MULLIGAN
310, Sweetwater, TX

MOST HATED

- 1—MR. WRESTLING II
232, Atlanta, GA
- 2—JAKE ROBERTS
243, Baton Rouge, LA
- 3—KENDO NAGASAKI
248, Singapore
- 4—DICK SLATER
235, Tampa, FL
- 5—HACKSAW REED
249, Kansas City, MO
- 6—KRUSHER KHRUSHCHEV
303, Thief River Falls, MN
- 7—THE IRON SHEIK
262, Teheran, Iran
- 8—JOS LeDUC
280, Godbout, Quebec
- 9—KEN PATERA
256, Portland, OR
- 10—JIM GARVIN
235, Tampa, FL

NWA

- World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 1—DICK SLATER
235, Tampa, FL
 - 2—BRAD ARMSTRONG
223, Pensacola, FL
 - 3—HARLEY RACE
253, Kansas City, MO
 - 4—RON BASS
285, Pampa, TX
 - 5—IVAN KOLOFF
249, Moscow, Russia
 - 6—CARLOS COLON
238, Bayamon, Puerto Rico
 - 7—KENDO NAGASAKI
248, Singapore
 - 8—CHRIS ADAMS
225, Stratford on Avon, England
 - 9—KEVIN VON ERICH
254, Denton, TX
 - 10—SHOHEI "GIANT" BABA
323, Tokyo, Japan

AWA

- World Champion:
JUMBO TSURUTA
240, Tokyo, Japan
- 1—BLACKJACK LANZA
260, Laredo, TX
 - 2—NICK BOCKWINKEL
245, Beverly Hills, CA
 - 3—BLACKJACK MULLIGAN
310, Sweetwater, TX
 - 4—JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
 - 5—BRAD RHEINGANS
248, Minneapolis, MN
 - 6—MAD DOG VACHON
225, Algeria
 - 7—MR. SAITO
247, Osaka, Japan
 - 8—GREG GAGNE
220, Robinsdale, MN
 - 9—JIM BRUNZELL
225, Minneapolis, MN
 - 10—JESSE VENTURA
270, Muscle Beach, CA

ICIAL NG RATINGS

For period ended March 28, 1984

Below are the ratings for the top regional wrestling areas of the country. These ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestlers, promoters, and reporters.

WWF

Champion:

HULK HOGAN

320, Venice Beach, CA

1—**PAUL ORNDORFF**

253, Brandon, FL

2—**TITO SANTANA**

245, Mission, TX

3—**GREG VALENTINE**

243, Seattle, WA

4—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**

310, Parris Island, SC

5—**THE IRON SHEIK**

262, Teheran, Iran

6—**JIMMY SNUKA**

250, Fiji Islands

7—**BOB BACKLUND**

242, Princeton, MN

8—**MAGNIFICENT MURACO**

262, Sunset Beach, HI

9—**DAVID SHULTZ**

265, Memphis, TN

10—**MASKED SUPERSTAR**

282, Atlanta, GA

GEORGIA

1—**BRAD ARMSTRONG**

223, Pensacola, FL

2—**JAKE ROBERTS**

243, Baton Rouge, LA

3—**KING KONG BUNDY**

420, Atlantic City, NJ

4—**THE SPOILER**

266, parts unknown

5—**RONNIE GARVIN**

231, Montreal, Quebec

6—**SWEET BROWN SUGAR**

226, Dallas, TX

7—**WAHOO McDANIEL**

260, Midland, TX

8—**STAN HANSEN**

243, Borger, TX

9—**TOMMY ROGERS**

222, St. Petersburg, FL

10—**TIM HORNER**

235, Morristown, TN

FLORIDA

1—**RON BASS**

285, Tampa, TX

2—**KENDO NAGASAKI**

248, Singapore

3—**DUSTY RHODES**

302, Austin, TX

4—**BARRY WINDHAM**

230, Sweetwater, TX

5—**MIKE ROTONDO**

245, Syracuse, NY

6—**BILLY JACK**

245, Portland, OR

7—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**

235, Boston, MA

8—**BUZZ SAWYER**

240, St. Petersburg, FL

9—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**

280, New York, NY

10—**MIKE GRAHAM**

232, Tampa, FL

MID-ATLANTIC

1—**DICK SLATER**

235, Tampa, FL

2—**IVAN KOLOFF**

249, Moscow, Russia

3—**MARK YOUNGBLOOD**

230, Amarillo, TX

4—**ANGELO MOSCA JR.**

234, Caledon, Ontario

5—**JIMMY VALLANT**

251, New York, NY

6—**WAHOO McDANIEL**

260, Midland, TX

7—**JUNKYARD DOG**

260, New Orleans, LA

8—**ANGELO MOSCA SR.**

309, Caledon, Ontario

9—**DORY FUNK JR.**

244, Amarillo, TX

10—**RUFUS R. JONES**

287, Boston, MA

WORLD CLASS

1—**CHRIS ADAMS**

225, Stratford on Avon, England

2—**JIM GARVIN**

235, Tampa, FL

3—**KERRY VON ERICH**

251, Denton, TX

4—**KEVIN VON ERICH**

254, Denton, TX

5—**ICEMAN PARSONS**

242, St. Louis, MO

6—**MIKE VON ERICH**

220, Denton, TX

7—**HACKSAW REED**

249, Kansas City, MO

8—**JOHNNY MANTELL**

230, Decatur, TX

9—**KAMALA**

360, Uganda

10—**MISSING LINK**

273, parts unknown

MID-SOUTH

1—**MR. WRESTLING II**

232, Atlanta, GA

2—**MAGNUM T.A.**

245, Chesapeake, VA

3—**JUNKYARD DOG**

260, New Orleans, LA

4—**NIKOLAI VOLKOFF**

345, Siberia, Russia

5—**TERRY TAYLOR**

219, Tampa, FL

6—**KRUSHER KHRUSHCHEV**

303, Thief River Falls, MN

7—**HACKSAW REED**

249, Kansas City, MO

8—**LANNY POFFO**

228, Sarasota, FL

9—**KAMALA**

360, Uganda

10—**JOE SAVOLDI**

238, Parsippany, NJ

MID-SOUTHERN

1—**AUSTIN IDOL**

240, Las Vegas, NV

2—**JERRY LAWLER**

234, Memphis, TN

3—**JOS LeDUC**

280, Godbout, Quebec

4—**RICK RUDE**

233, Robinsdale, MN

5—**DUTCH MANTEL**

224, Oil Trough, TX

6—**EDDIE GILBERT**

222, Lexington, TN

7—**TOMMY RICH**

238, Hendersonville, TN

8—**RANDY SAVAGE**

235, Sarasota, FL

9—**STAGGER LEE**

217, Union City, TN

10—**NORVELL AUSTIN**

239, Pensacola, FL

NORTHWEST

1—**RIP OLIVER**

245, Tampa, FL

2—**MATT BORNE**

240, Milwaukie, OR

3—**PLAYBOY BUDDY ROSE**

245, Minneapolis, MN

4—**CURT HENNIG**

235, Minneapolis, MN

5—**THE ASSASSIN**

240, parts unknown

6—**BRETT SAWYER**

242, St. Petersburg, FL

7—**JULES STRONGBOW**

247, Pawhuska, OK

8—**SCOTT McGHEE**

220, Shipley, England

9—**TOM PRITCHARD**

220, Houston, TX

10—**JERRY O**

235, New Haven, CT

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CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 10)



Killer Brooks won the Texas brawl in Temple and the \$5,000 first prize, but he paid with his blood.

Eight out of the 10 participants were bleeding by the end of the match. The last two men in the ring were Brooks and Perez. Brooks used a sharp metal object to cut Perez' forehead. After further abuse, Perez dropped to the mat and Brooks was handed the \$5,000 winner's purse.

In other bouts, Brooks defeated Garcia ... Perez and Jagers defeated The Fabulous Blonds ... Street defeated Leon ... Fernandez and Miller were both disqualified.

Memphis, Tennessee (Correspondent—Chuck Morris): Jackie Fargo's new Fabulous Ones, Tommy "Wildfire" Rich and Eddie Gilbert, battled Jimmy Hart's infamous Moondogs in the main event at the Mid-South Coliseum.

The duo of Rich and Gilbert started strongly, flustering Rex and Spot with fast-paced scientific maneuvers. Soon, Hart became desperate. He gave Spot one of the huge bones the team carries into the ring. Spot swung wildly at Gilbert and missed. As Rich battled Rex outside the ring, Hart tried to run into the ring at Gilbert, but Gilbert met him at the ropes and bodyslammed the manager.

Rich kept Rex outside the ring as Gilbert executed the atomic spinecrusher on Spot, gaining a very popular—and very fabulous—victory.

In other bouts, Jerry Lawler and Jos LeDuc defeated The Muslims ... Austin Idol defeated Randy Savage by disqualification ... Spike Huber, Scott Shannon, and Dutch Mantel defeated King Konga, Black Ninja and The Executioner ... Stagger Lee and Norvell Austin beat The A Team ... Rick Rude defeated Buggy McGraw.

Lafayette, Louisiana (Correspondent—Daniel Graffeo): Nikolai Volkoff squared off against Terry Taylor in a Russian death match, in which the wrestlers were connected at the neck by a 10-foot rope. The winner had to drag the loser to all four corners of the ring to claim the victory.

As the fans chanted "U-S-A ... U-S-A," the smaller Taylor managed to pull the 345-pound Volkoff to the canvas. Taylor began to drag Volkoff around the ring and had touched three corners before Volkoff rose to his feet and began to choke his opponent. Volkoff pounded Taylor with fists and kicks and then began to drag Taylor around the ring.

With two turnbuckles to go, Taylor, hearing the crowd's chants, summoned up a reserve of strength and battled back. Before long, he had Volkoff weakened. Taylor then triumphantly paraded around the ring, dragging Volkoff behind him as he touched all four corners for the victory.

In other bouts, The Rock 'n' Roll Express defeated Tom Lintz and Jerry Gray ... Krusher Khrushchev defeated George Weingeroff ... Masao Ito defeated Lanny Poffo. □

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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 12)

rush things, you eliminate a lot of the danger."

Q: "I have a question for Greg Valentine: The last time you were in the WWF, The Grand Wizard was your manager. Since the Wizard has passed away, you've taken on Capt. Lou Albano to manage you in the WWF. Are there any changes in your wrestling style because of the switch?"—Stan Hayster, Pawtucket, RI

A: Valentine replied: "First, let me say this, because I haven't had the chance before. The Grand Wizard was a brilliant man, a manager beyond compare, and a good friend. I miss him very much. Now, about Capt. Lou: The Captain used to be a wrestler, whereas the Wizard wasn't. He has a different perspective on a lot of things. Lou concentrates on wrestling more, where the Wiz concentrated more on the business end. I don't mean to say that Capt. Lou isn't a fine businessman, because he is. As far as wrestling goes, the Captain leaves his imprint on every wrestler's style, and I'm sure he will with me, also. Together, I think we'll make a lot of money, and eventually beat Hulk Hogan. I think the WWF title belt would look really fine around my waist."

Q: For Rick Steamboat: "You said that the reason you are coming out of retirement is to wrestle Ric Flair for the NWA World title. If you beat Flair, what will you do? Will you defend the title, or will you retire again?"—Frank Sedgwick, Columbia, SC

A: "Winning the NWA World title is the goal of every wrestler,



Rick Steamboat is coming out of retirement for another chance to wrestle NWA World heavyweight champion Ric Flair.

and winning it might just be enough," Steamboat replied. "I might beat Ric and retire the title. Then again, only God knows what I will do once I have that belt around my waist. It's hard to say until you're there. I have to win the title first, though, and I'm training real hard right now in preparation. I guess what I'm saying, Frank, is that you'll know what I'm gonna do when I know."

Q: "I have a question for Gorgeous Jim Garvin: When are you going to give up trying to outsmart Sunshine? She is obviously a lot more intelligent than you are."—Ozzie George, Corpus Christi, TX

A: "Just another stupid fan," Garvin replied. "As far as I'm concerned, these idiot fans and that bimbo blonde deserve each other. They communicate on the same level, below sea level, that is. It's really pretty sad, I think, that anyone really thinks that Sunshine is smart. I call her I.Q., but not because

hers is high. I.Q. stands for Idiot Queen. She's their leader. I guess that makes Chris Adams the king, huh?"

Q: "My question is for Nikolai Volkoff: Listen Volkoff, if you hate the United States so much, why don't you just leave and go back to Russia? We don't want you here."—Janice Dawson, New Orleans

A: "There are reasons for my stay in this disgusting capitalist country of yours," Volkoff said. "It is my duty to show all Americans that the people of the Soviet Union are far superior to them, in every facet of life. We are more intelligent, we are stronger, and we are more loyal. We are better in every way,



Nikolai Volkoff says that it is his duty as a Russian to show the Americans how inferior they are.

because of the strong personal loyalty we have to our government, which will provide for all of our needs. The American system is weak. Americans are weak. The Soviet Union is strong and will always be the strongest of the two, and the sooner you Americans realize that the better off you will be."



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JIMMY VALIANT

(Continued from page 31)

vealed more than anything how seriously Jones was taking this challenge. He worked his tag team relentlessly. When they entered the arena the night of the match, they would be as good as it was humanly possible to make them.

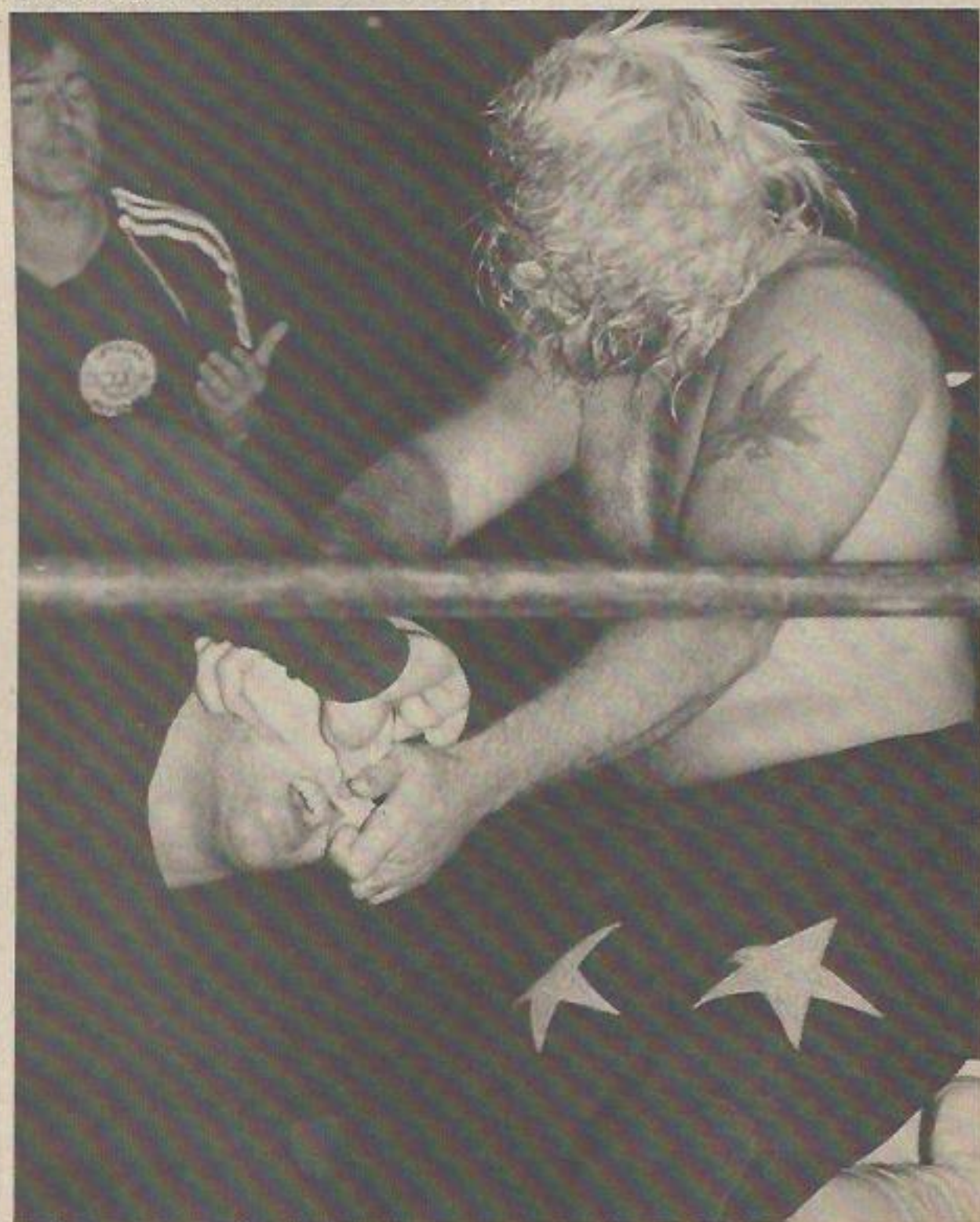
The day before the match, Jones declared, "I won't be satisfied defeating Valiant and Rhodes. I won't accept anything less than humiliating them. The Assassins are ready to do that."

The night of the match found both tag teams nervous but anxious for combat. Valiant especially was electric with excitement. Rhodes spent a good deal of time before

the match trying to calm Jim down. Dusty knew it was important both men were controlled professionals, as calm as possible before the battle.

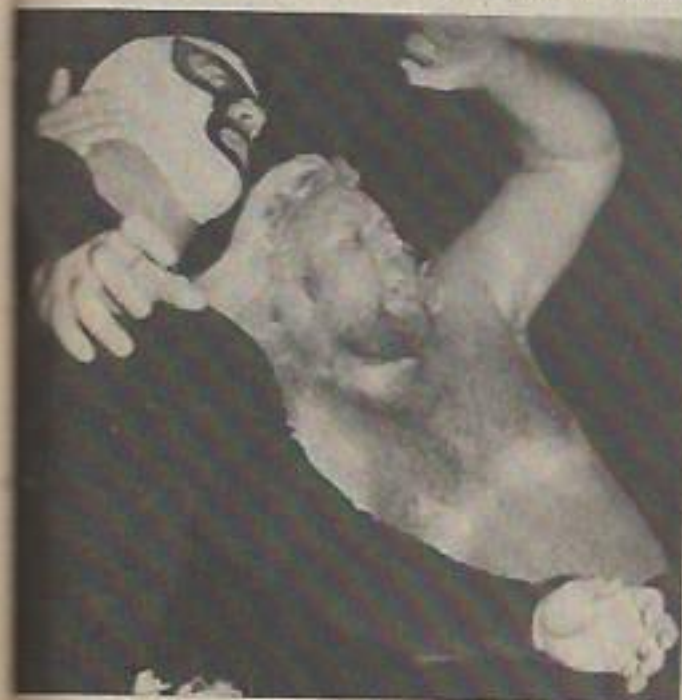
Then the match began. From the beginning it was the war everyone expected. Within seconds of his first taste of combat, Rhodes battled as if The Assassins had been his enemies forever. As for the rule-breaking tag team, they never wrestled with more ferocity. They had been trained well by Jones and were cruelly executing every dirty trick their manager taught them.

As might be expected, the match soon turned into a bloodbath. Crim-



The Boogie Woogie Man tries to reveal the face of Assassin I, who would receive aid from his partner before the mask can be pulled off.

son masks obscured the features of Valiant and Rhodes. Many fans had to turn away from the ring, the gory spectacle too much for them to take. Still, Valiant and Rhodes persevered, refusing to give an inch. The crowd was on its feet, cheering on their heroes. Some spectators say they saw a look of respect on Jones' face as he watched Valiant and Rhodes bravely battle. They



Valiant lets out a yell as he grabs Assassin II by the back of the head and slams him into the tumbuckles.

certainly deserved the manager's respect.

The match was a draw. Bloody but unbowed, Valiant and Rhodes accepted the cheers of the fans as they made their way back to the dressing room. There they found the doctor waiting to stitch up their wounds. Valiant insisted Rhodes be treated first. When it was Jim's turn, his bandaged partner told him, "My schedule doesn't let me stay in any one place for a long time. But if you ever really need me again, if you can't find anyone willing to help you against The Assassins, I'll move heaven and earth to get back here."

They shook on it.

The next day, Paul Jones received a phone call. The familiar voice made it unnecessary for Jones to ask the name. "I'm leaving today," the voice said, "but I'll be back. And when I return, Daddy, your tag team becomes a memory!"

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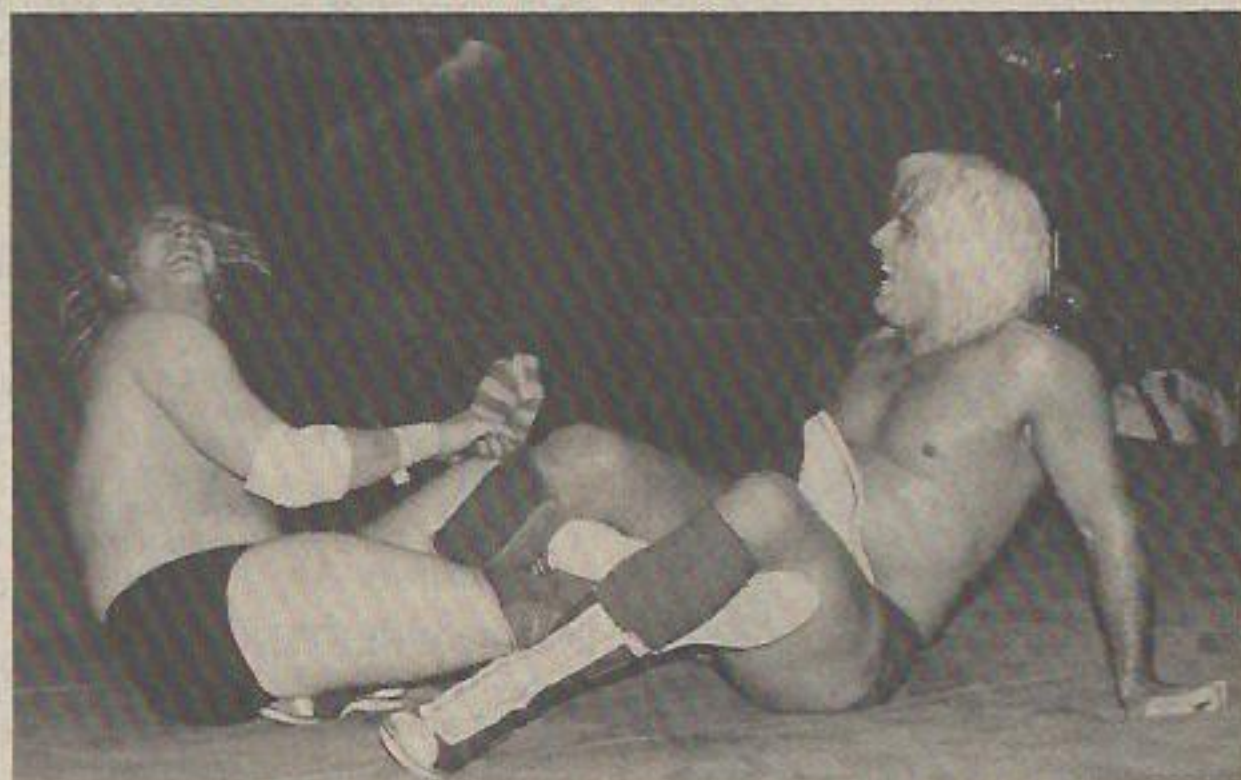
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RIC FLAIR

(Continued from page 33)



Flair enjoys the predicament in which he has Tommy Rich. Flair's figure-four leglock is among the best in pro wrestling history, and there's nothing he'd enjoy more than to clamp that hold on his challenger at the Meadowlands Arena in New Jersey.

continued, "everyone wants to be the man to challenge for the NWA World title in the Meadowlands. Jack Brisco, Angelo Mosca, Jimmy Valiant, Dick Slater, Carlos Colon, Dusty Rhodes, Harley Race, Ted DiBiase—you name him, and he's in line for a chance to sign that contract.

"But I'm the best in the world, and that means I fight hard to stay on top, where I belong. And I'm so fired up for this match, I don't care *who* it's against. Because I'm looking past that match, I'm looking to that night when, with that 10 pounds of gold successfully defended and safely in my possession, I hit the streets of New York, walk down Broadway, and celebrate like there hasn't been a celebration in New York in 20 years or more!

"I'm going to eat in the finest restaurants, visit the finest night-clubs, and turn the heads of the finest women, because New York hasn't seen anything until they've seen Ric Flair. *Whooh!* I'm going

to own that town before long, I'm going to show them what class, style, and grace is all about. I'm gonna party hearty! You know, Pete, I haven't even been there yet and I can't wait to get back! *Whooh!*"

As our limousine continued to tour Atlanta, I couldn't help thinking how I've never seen Flair so enthusiastic. Our limousine ride took place in March, more than two months before his scheduled match in the Meadowlands, and his opponent wasn't even determined at the time.

But whomever that opponent happens to be, I feel safe in predicting that Flair's energy and intensity will make the match a classic—one that everyone will want to read about, and one that fans in the New York area will not want to miss.

[Editor's note: Further details on the first NWA wrestling card in 20 years in the New York area can be found in the July issue of Inside Wrestling, now on sale. That magazine contains a story entitled, "Ric Flair Brings The World Title To The New York Area: Get Ready For A Night Of Champions At The Meadowlands."] □

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This space contributed by the publisher.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 6)

Ladd. While this was happening, Brown dropkicked Ladd from behind. Ladd slammed chinfirst into the turnbuckle and fell back to the mat. Brown hooked his leg and scored the pinfall victory! Rufus came into the ring and was celebrating with Brown, but Ladd quickly recovered, and smashed Rufus in the head, knocking him to the mat. He then climbed to the top rope and delivered a devastating flying bodypress. It looks like Jones and Ladd will soon be at war.

Precious Paul Ellering has placed a bounty, for an undisclosed amount of money, on **King Kong Bundy** . . . **The Moondogs** have returned to the WWF area . . . **Brian Adidas** is wrestling in the Mid-Atlantic area.

Fans in the AWA area are still buzzing about **Nick Bockwinkel's** loss of the AWA World heavyweight title to **Jumbo Tsuruta**. Many fans are upset by the

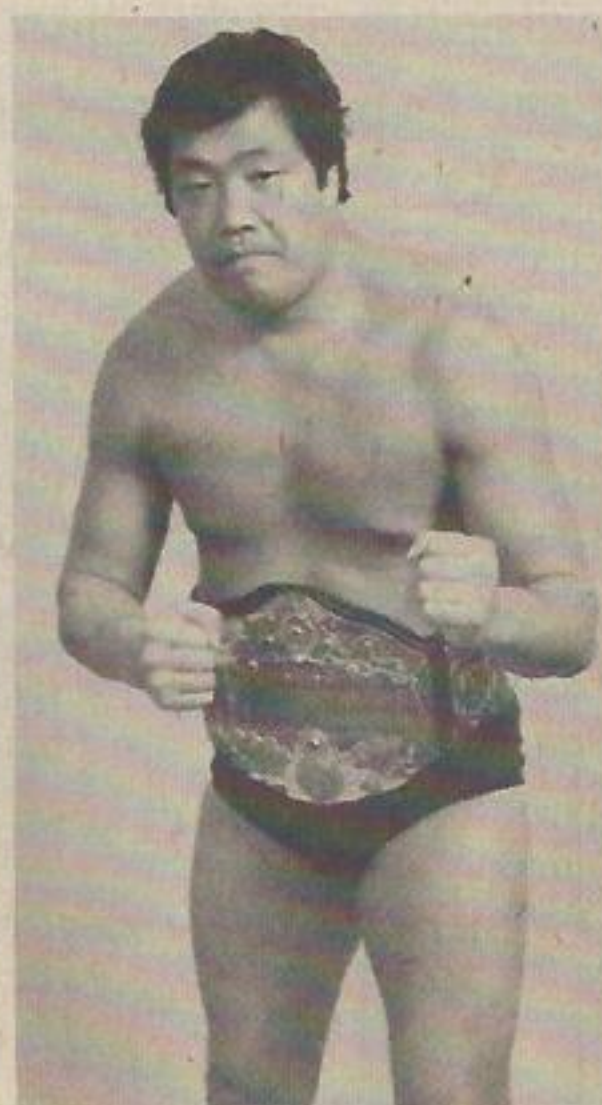
thought that Tsuruta may take the belt back to Japan permanently—a worry that was common back in late 1982 when **Otto Wanz** defeated Bockwinkel for the title and claimed he would take the belt back to Austria.



Chavo and Hector Guerrero have joined forces as a tag team in Florida. Unfortunately, it seems that Chavo has adopted the rulebreaking methods of his younger brother.

Chavo Guerrero and **Hector Guerrero** are wrestling in tag team matches throughout Florida . . . **The Great Kabuki** blew his mysterious green fog into the eyes of **Angelo Mosca**, who has lost all but 20 percent of the vision in his right eye . . . **Bruiser Brody** is demanding a rematch against NWA World heavyweight champion **Ric Flair**.

Capt. Lou Albano continues to receive a great deal of attention for appearing in the video version of rock star **Cyndi Lauper's** hit song, "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun." Lauper was recently profiled in *Newsweek* magazine and appeared on *The Tonight Show With Johnny Carson*. Cyndi spoke of how Albano taught her the PEG Principle—Politeness, Etiquette, and Grooming. "Just by looking at him, you can tell that Albano is a well-groomed individual," she said.



Jumbo Tsuruta has given indications that he might relocate the base of the AWA World championship to Japan.

Killer Brooks currently holds the Southwest heavyweight championship ... **Roddy Piper** has been wrestling in the Pacific Northwest area in tag team matches along with **Playboy Buddy Rose** ... **Paul Orndorff** pinned **Rocky Johnson** in a recently televised WWF match, but the referee's decision went to Johnson because Orndorff had thrown his opponent over the top rope.

Jake "The Snake" Roberts is having a grand time spending the \$34,000 he received from **Ronnie Garvin**. Garvin had to pay the money in order to receive a match against Roberts in Atlanta's Omni. Roberts has bought himself a fur coat, among other things, and his newfound wealth has also led the way to a newfound look: If you look closely at Roberts' hair, you'll notice sparkles and glitter!

Brett Sawyer has announced that he has no plans to leave the Pacific Northwest area, at least not before the end of 1984 ... **Exotic Adrian Street** is negotiating to wrestle in the Mid-Atlantic area ...



Adrian Street might to soon bring his exotic style of wrestling to the Mid-Atlantic area.

"Anvil" Jim Neidhart appears to be headed to the Mid-Southern area.

And that's what's happening. See you at the matches.

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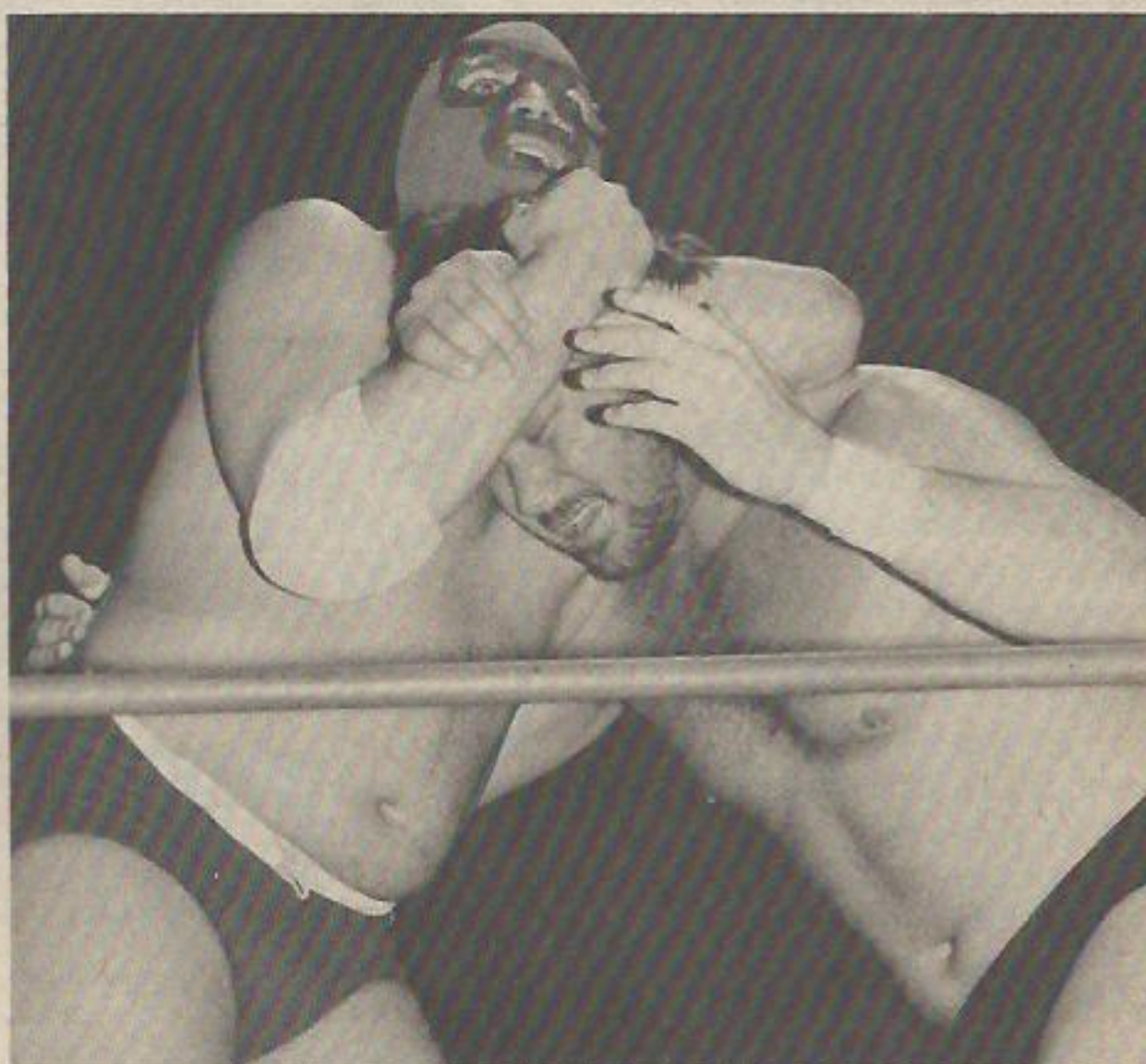
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TOMMY RICH

(Continued from page 35)



Most fans believed that after Rich was forced out of wrestling, he came back to wrestle in disguise as Mr. R. Ted DiBiase, the man who illegally defeated Rich in their loser leave wrestling match, is held in a crossover headlock by Mr. R.

Southern region and not Georgia, where he actually lost the match that put him out of wrestling. I'll bet he really hadn't made up his mind until the next day in the commissioner's office. When the commissioner asked him for a decision, I'll bet Tommy was as surprised as anyone when he answered."

Tommy's answer: "If you can, break the contract."

It wasn't hard. Surprisingly, Ted DiBiase put up very little resistance. That made things much easier. When the NWA's lawyers approached the judge to void the contract, there was no lawyer for DiBiase to oppose it. As neither party wished to keep the contract in effect, the judge decided it was legally void. Tommy Rich could now wrestle anywhere and everywhere he chose.

Perhaps the least happy person in the courtroom was Tommy. He still wasn't sure he was doing the

right thing. It isn't easy for an honorable man to accept that some situations have no totally honorable resolution. For the rest of his career, a small part of Tommy will wonder if he has any right to earn a living in the squared circle.

Afterward, he told reporters, "I have something to prove in every match. Each time I enter an arena, I have to earn the right to be there. I have to make people forget about me breaking this contract. I have to be doubly scientific and take on all challengers. I'm resuming my career for the fans. Whatever they want or need, I'll do. They're the only real reason I have for wrestling."

It wasn't a happy Tommy Rich who left the courtroom that day, but it was certainly a determined Tommy Rich. He has made the fans very happy. Now a much harder task confronts him. He has to make himself happy. ☐